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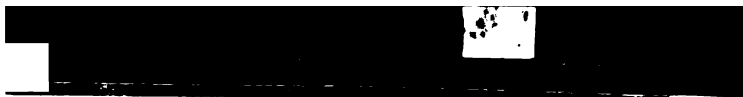


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**THE
CRITICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS
PROSE WORKS
OF
JOHN DRYDEN,
NOW FIRST COLLECTED:
WITH NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS;
AN ACCOUNT OF THE
LIFE AND WRITINGS OF THE AUTHOR,
GROUNDED ON
ORIGINAL AND AUTHENTICK DOCUMENTS,
AND
A COLLECTION OF HIS LETTERS,
THE GREATER PART OF WHICH HAS NEVER BEFORE
BEEN PUBLISHED.**

By EDMOND MALONE, Esq.

VOL. I. PART I.

LONDON:

**PRINTED BY H. BALDWIN AND SON, NEW BRIDGE-STREET,
FOR T. CADELL, JUN. AND W. DAVIES, IN THE STRAND.**

M,DCCC.

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Engraved by W. B. Evans.

JOHN DRYDEN.

*an original portrait, in the Picture Gallery at Oxford
painted in his thirty third year; - 1664.*

*a print engraved by Faithorne, Jun. after Cluitermaier's
painted probably about the year 1690.*

a portrait painted by Sir Godfrey Kneller, in 1692.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE great author of the following works has long had the honour of being ranked in the first class of English Poets; for to the names of Shakspeare, Spencer, and Milton, we have now for near a century been in the habit of annexing those of DRYDEN, and his scholar, Pope. The present publication will shew, that he is equally entitled to our admiration as a writer of Prose; and that among his various merits, that of having cultivated, refined, and improved our language, is not the least. In making, therefore, this Collection of his Critical and Miscellaneous Essays, which are found dispersed in a great variety of books, many of them now not easily to be procured, I trust that, while I have done an acceptable service to good letters and to the publick, I have at the same time in some degree contributed to the fame of the author; a considerable portion of whose valuable writings will thus become accessible and familiar to a more numerous class of readers than the votaries of the

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Muses, and whose reputation, high as it is at present, will consequently be extended to a still wider circle than that within which it has hitherto been confined.

In the arrangement of the various pieces contained in these volumes, chronological order has been attended to, as far as was consistent with other still more important objects. With a view to mutual illustration, I have placed together all the Essays respecting the Stage; from which I have selected and given precedence to the seven principal, both in value and bulk, as forming one great body of dramattick criticism. These are, the Essay of Dramattick Poesy, the Defence of that Essay, the Preface to the Mock Astrologer, the Essay on Heroick Plays, the Defence of the Epilogue to the Second Part of the Conquest of Granada, the Grounds of Criticism in Tragedy, and the Answer to Rymer. All our author's Dramattick Dedications and Prefaces, not comprised in the foregoing list, then follow, in the order of time in which they were written; and to these succeed all his other critical Prefaces, Dedications, Lives, and Miscellaneous Essays, chronologically arranged; with the exception of the Preface to the Translation of Ovid's Epistles, which, for the sake of juxtaposition, is placed in the same volume with the Preface to the Second Miscellany, nearly the same topicks being discussed in both.

The first edition of each piece has in general been followed : but here also some deviation was necessary ; for on collating the second edition of the **ESSAY OF DRAMATICK POESY** printed in 1684, with the first of 1668, I found that the author had corrected it with great care. From his revised copy, therefore, that Essay has been printed. In a Letter to his bookseller he mentions, that, previously to his Translation of Virgil being sent a second time to the press, he had spent nine days in reviewing it. As it was probable therefore, that some alterations and amendments were made in the Essays prefixed to that work, (though I now believe his revision was confined to the poetry,) I thought it safest, in printing those Essays, to follow the second edition ; here, however, as well as in the former instance, availing myself occasionally of such aid as the earlier copies afforded, by which some literal errors of the press, both in those Dissertations and the Dramatick Essay, have been corrected. Of every other piece in these volumes the first edition has been followed, excepting only the Defence of that Essay ; of which the original copy is so rare, that I have never met with it.

Of Dryden's **LETTERS**, very few of which have ever been printed, I wished to form as ample a collection as could be procured ; and am highly indebted to William Baker, Esq., Representative in Parliament for the county of Hertford, who most

obligingly has furnished me with all the correspondence, now extant, which passed between our author and his bookseller, Jacob Tonson, from whom these papers descended to that gentleman : which, beside exhibiting a lively portrait of this great poet, contain some curious documents respecting the price of his works, and some other interesting particulars concerning them. To this series I have added a letter written in his youth to Mrs. Honour Driden, from the original in the hands of the Rev. Mr. Blakeway, of Shrewsbury ; a letter to John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, from a manuscript copy in the Museum ; one to Samuel Pepys, Esq., from the original in the Pepysian Collection in Magdalene College, Cambridge ; one to Charles Montague, afterwards Earl of Halifax, from the original in my possession ; and sixteen letters addressed, at a late period of life, to his kinswoman, Mrs. Steward, or her husband ; which have been obligingly communicated to me by her grand-daughter, Mrs. Gwillim, of Whitchurch, near Ross, in Herefordshire, by the hands of Mrs. Ord, of Queen Anne-street. Some others have been found scattered in miscellaneous volumes ; and many more, I have no doubt, are in the possession of various persons, which might easily be discovered, if they would but search their family papers. With the hope that such an examination may be made, I shall give, in a subsequent page, a list of *those persons in whose cabinets Dryden's letters are likely to be found.*

My warmest acknowledgments are also due to my friend James Bindley, Esq. First Commissioner in the Stamp-Office, whose urbanity, classical taste, and various knowledge, are only exceeded by his great liberality in the communication of the very curious materials for literary history, and the illustration of temporary allusions, which his valuable library contains. By the aid of some very rare tracts and poems in his possession, several of which are wanting in my own Collection, I have been enabled to throw some new light on our author's history, as well as on many of his writings; as I have more particularly mentioned in the proper places.—I have also to express my acknowledgments to the Lord Bishop of Salisbury and the Lord Bishop of Peterborough, for the facility and aid which they very readily afforded to my researches in their respective dioceses; and to request that the various Clergymen in Northamptonshire, in Wiltshire, in Oxford, and in Cambridge, to whom I have had occasion to apply, will accept my sincere thanks for the very obliging attention they were pleased to pay to my inquiries, concerning each of which they furnished me with the most satisfactory information. The present Lady Dryden also, great grand-daughter of Erasmus Dryden, the poet's younger brother, and widow of the late Sir John Turner Dryden, Bart. will, I hope, allow me thus publickly to thank her for having taken the trouble to inspect her

family papers, by which the precise value of our author's Northamptonshire estate has been ascertained. Zealous to contribute every aid in her power to illustrate the history of her great kinsman, this lady entered with ardour on the inquiry which I took the liberty to suggest to her, and pursued it with such diligence and sagacity as to remove all doubt on a point of some importance, which had eluded the researches of all his biographers.

On reviewing the received accounts of his Life and Writings, I found so much inaccuracy and uncertainty, that I soon resolved to take nothing upon trust, but to consider the subject as wholly new; and I have had abundant reason to be satisfied with my determination on this head; for by inquiries and researches in every quarter where information was likely to be obtained, I have procured more materials than my most sanguine expectations had promised; which, if they do not exhibit so many particulars concerning this great poet as could be desired, have yet furnished us with some curious and interesting notices, and cleared away much confusion, and error; and enabled me to ascertain several circumstances of his life and fortunes, which were either unknown, or for almost a century the subject of uncertain speculation and conjecture.

The PROSE of Dryden has been so long and so justly admired for its copiousness, harmony, rich-

ness, and variety, that to adduce any testimony in its favour seems unnecessary. To the high eulogy of Congreve on this head, which will be found in a subsequent page, and the printed encomiums of Dr. Warton,¹ Mr. Mason,² and Dr. Beattie,³ I may however add the authority of the late Mr. Burke, who had very diligently read all his miscellaneous Essays, which he held in high estimation, not only for the instruction which they contain, but on account of the rich and numerous prose in which that instruction is conveyed. On the language of Dryden, on which perhaps his own style was originally in some measure formed, I have often heard him expatiate with great admiration; and if the works of Burke be examined with this view, he will, I believe, be found more nearly to resemble this great author than any other English writer.⁴

¹ Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope, 8vo. 1782, vol. ii. pp. 8, 403.

² Works of Sir J. Reynolds, 8vo. 1798, vol. iii. p. 216.

³ Essays on Poetry, &c. 8vo. 1778, pp. 16,—533.

⁴ See particularly a passage in the beginning of Dryden's Discourse on Satire, vol. iii. p. 75 :—" It is true I have one privilege," &c. which has a strong resemblance to the style of Mr. Burke. I may add, that Dr. Johnson's general character of Dryden's writings in p. xvi,— " His works abound with knowledge," to—" intellectual wealth," might be justly affixed as a motto to the volumes of Burke.

Dr. Johnson has said, that “ whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison.” He who has this object in view, may surely, with equal propriety, be counselled to study the pages of Dryden ; for in them, with the ease, simplicity, and familiar language of Addison, will be found conjoined more fervour, more strength, and more variety. The great characteristick of Addison is his frequent use of vernacular idiom ; of which Dryden was so fond, that having on one occasion employed the Anglo-Latin word, *diction*, he makes a kind of apology, by translating it : in this respect, therefore, he is entitled to the encomium given to the ancient bard whose TALES he has so happily modernized, and may with equal truth be called—“ the well of English undefiled.” But his best praise is found in the following observations of Dr. Johnson, which contain so judicious an account of the pieces comprised in these volumes, that not to prefix them to this Collection of his Prose Works, would be great injustice to our author.

“ Dryden may be properly considered as the father of English criticism, as the writer who first taught us to determine upon principles the merit of composition. Of our former poets, the greatest

dramatist wrote without rules, conducted through life and nature by a genius that rarely misled, and rarely deserted him. Of the rest, those who knew the laws of propriety had neglected to teach them.

“TWO ARTS OF ENGLISH POETRY were written in the days of Elizabeth by Webbe and Puttenham, from which something might be learned, and a few hints had been given by Jonson and Cowley; but Dryden's *ESSAY ON DRAMATICK POESY* was the first regular treatise on the art of writing.

“He who, having formed his opinions in the present age of English literature, turns back to peruse this Dialogue, will not perhaps find much increase of knowledge, or much novelty of instruction; but he is to remember that critical principles were then in the hands of a few, who had gathered them partly from the Ancients, and partly from the Italians and French. The structure of dramattick poems was not then generally understood. Audiences applauded by instinct, and poets perhaps often pleased by chance.

“A writer who obtains his full purpose, loses himself in his own lustre. Of an opinion which is no longer doubted, the evidence ceases to be examined. Of an art universally practised, the first teacher is forgotten. Learning once made popular is no longer learning; it has the appearance of something which we have bestowed upon

ourselves, as the dew appears to rise from the field which it refreshes.

“To judge rightly of an authour, we must transport ourselves to his time, and examine what were the wants of his contemporaries, and what were his means of supplying them. That which is easy at one time was difficult at another. Dryden at least imported his science, and gave his country what it wanted before; or rather, he imported only the materials, and manufactured them by his own skill.

“The Dialogue on the Drama was one of his first essays of criticism, written when he was yet a timorous candidate for reputation, and therefore laboured with that diligence which he might allow himself somewhat to remit, when his name gave sanction to his positions, and his awe of the publick was abated, partly by custom, and partly by success. It will not be easy to find, in all the opulence of our language, a treatise so artfully variegated with successive representations of opposite probabilities, so enlivened with imagery, so brightened with illustrations. His portraits of the English dramatists are wrought with great spirit and diligence. The account of Shakspeare may stand as a perpetual model of encomiastick criticism; exact without minuteness, and lofty without exaggeration. The praise lavished by Longinus on the attestation of the heroes of Marathon by Demosthenes, fades

away before it. In a few lines is exhibited a character, so extensive in its comprehension, and so curious in its limitations, that nothing can be added, diminished, or reformed; nor can the editors and admirers of Shakspeare, in all their emulation of reverence, boast of much more than of having diffused and paraphrased this epitome of excellence, of having changed Dryden's gold for baser metal, of lower value though of greater bulk.

"In this, and in all his other Essays on the same subject, the criticism of Dryden is the criticism of a poet; not a dull collection of theorems, nor a rude detection of faults, which perhaps the censor was not able to have committed; but a gay and vigorous dissertation, where delight is mingled with instruction, and where the authour proves his right of judgment, by his power of performance.

"The different manner and effect with which critical knowledge may be conveyed, was perhaps never more clearly exemplified than in the performances of Rymer and Dryden. It was said of a dispute between two mathematicians, "*malim cum Scaligero errare, quam cum Clavio rectè sapere;*" that *it was more eligible to go wrong with one, than right with the other.* A tendency of the same kind every mind must feel at the perusal of

Dryden's prefaces and Rymer's discourses. With Dryden, we are wandering in quest of Truth; whom we find, if we find her at all, dressed in the graces of elegance; and if we miss her, the labour of the pursuit rewards itself; we are led only through fragrance and flowers: Rymer, without taking a nearer, takes a rougher way; every step is to be made through thorns and brambles; and Truth, if we meet her, appears repulsive by her mien, and ungraceful by her habit. Dryden's criticism has the majesty of a queen; Rymer's has the ferocity of a tyrant.

"As he had studied with great diligence the art of poetry, and enlarged or rectified his notions by experience perpetually increasing, he had his mind stored with principles and observations; he poured out his knowledge with great liberality, and seldom published any work without a critical dissertation, by which he increased the book and the price, with little labour to himself; for of labour, notwithstanding the multiplicity of his productions, there is sufficient reason to suspect that he was not a lover. To write *con amore*, with fondness for the employment, with perpetual touches and re-touches, with unwillingness to take leave of his own idea, and an unwearied pursuit of unattainable perfection, was, I think, no part of his character.

"His Criticism may be considered as general or

occasional. In his general precepts, which depend upon the nature of things, and the structure of the human mind, he may doubtless be safely recommended to the confidence of the reader; but his occasional and particular positions were sometimes interested, sometimes negligent, and sometimes capricious. It is not without reason that Trapp, speaking of the praises which he bestows on Palamon and Arcite, says, "*Novimus judicium Drydeni de poemate quodam Chauceri, pulchro sane illo, et admodum laudando, nimirum quod non modo vere epicum sit, sed Iliada etiam atque Æneida æquet, imo superet. Sed novimus eodem tempore viri illius maximi non semper accuratissimas esse censuras, nec ad severissimam critices normam exactas: illo iudice id plerumque optimum est, quod nunc præ manibus habet, et in quo nunc occupatur.*"

"He is therefore by no means constant to himself. His defence and desertion of dramatick rhyme is generally known. Spence, in his Remarks on Pope's *Odyssey*, produces what he thinks an unconquerable quotation from Dryden's preface to the *Æneid*, in favour of translating an epick poem into blank verse; but he forgets that when his authour attempted the *Iliad*, some years afterwards, he departed from his own decision, and translated into rhyme.

“ When he has any objection to obviate, or any license to defend, he is not very scrupulous about what he asserts, nor very cautious, if the present purpose be served, not to entangle himself in his own sophistries. But when all arts are exhausted, like other hunted animals, he sometimes stands at bay ; as he cannot disown the grossness of one of his plays, he declares that he knows not any law that prescribes morality to a comick poet.

“ His remarks on ancient or modern writers are not always to be trusted. His parallel of the versification of Ovid with that of Claudian has been very justly censured by Sewel. His comparison of the first line of Virgil with the first of Statius is not happier. Virgil, he says, is soft and gentle, and would have thought Statius mad, if he had heard him thundering out

Quæ superimposito moles geminata colosso.

“ Statius perhaps heats himself, as he proceeds, to exaggerations somewhat hyperbolical ; but undoubtedly Virgil would have been too hasty, if he had condemned him to straw for one sounding line. Dryden wanted an instance, and the first that occurred was impressed into the service.

“ What he wishes to say, he says at hazard ; he cited GORBUDUC, which he had never seen ; gives a false account of Chapman's versification ; and

discovers, in the preface to his **FABLES**, that he translated the first book of the *Iliad*, without knowing what was in the second.

“ It will be difficult to prove that Dryden ever made any great advances in literature. As, having distinguished himself at Westminster under the tuition of Busby, who advanced his scholars to a height of knowledge very rarely attained in grammar-schools, he resided afterwards at Cambridge, it is not to be supposed that his skill in the ancient languages was deficient, compared with that of common students ; but his scholastick acquisitions seem not proportionate to his opportunities and abilities. He could not, like Milton or Cowley, have made his name illustrious merely by his learning. He mentions but few books, and those such as lie in the beaten track of regular study ; from which if ever he departs, he is in danger of losing himself in unknown regions.

“ In his Dialogue on the Drama, he pronounces with great confidence that the Latin tragedy of *Medea* is not Ovid's, because it is not sufficiently interesting and pathetick. He might have determined the question upon surer evidence ; for it is quoted by Quintilian as the work of Seneca ; and the only line which remains of Ovid's play, for one line is left us, is not there to be found. There was therefore no need of the gravity of conjecture,

or the discussion of plot or sentiment, to find what was already known upon higher authority than such discussions can ever reach.

“His literature, though not always free from ostentation, will be commonly found either obvious, and made his own by the art of dressing it; or superficial, which, by what he gives, shews what he wanted; or erroneous, hastily collected, and negligently scattered.

“Yet it cannot be said that his genius is ever unprovided of matter, or that his fancy languishes in penury of ideas. His works abound with knowledge, and sparkle with illustrations. There is scarcely any science or faculty that does not supply him with occasional images and lucky similitudes; every page discovers a mind very widely acquainted both with art and nature, and in full possession of great stores of intellectual wealth. Of him that knows much, it is natural to suppose that he has read with diligence; yet I rather believe that the knowledge of Dryden was gleaned from accidental intelligence and various conversation, by a quick apprehension, a judicious selection, and a happy memory, a keen appetite of knowledge, and a powerful digestion; by vigilance that permitted nothing to pass without notice, and a habit of reflection that suffered nothing useful to be lost. A mind like Dryden's, always curious,

always active, to which every understanding was proud to be associated, and of which every one solicited the regard, by an ambitious display of himself, had a more pleasant, perhaps a nearer, way to knowledge, than by the silent progress of solitary reading. I do not suppose that he despised books, or intentionally neglected them ; but that he was carried out, by the impetuosity of his genius, to more vivid and speedy instructors ; and that his studies were rather desultory and fortuitous than constant and systematical.

“ It must be confessed that he scarcely ever appears to want book-learning, but when he mentions books ; and to him may be transferred the praise which he gives his master, Charles :

His conversation, wit, and parts,
His knowledge in the noblest useful arts,
Were such, dead authors could not give,
But habitudes of those that live ;
Who, lighting him, did greater lights receive ;
He drain'd from all, and all they knew,
His apprehension quick, his judgment true :
That the most learn'd with shame confess
His knowledge more, his reading only less.

“ Of all this, however, if the proof be demanded, I will not undertake to give it ; the atoms of probability, of which my opinion has been formed, lie scattered over all his works ; and by him who

thinks the question worth his notice, his works must be perused with very close attention.

“ Criticism, either didactick or defensive, occupies almost all his prose, except those pages which he has devoted to his patrons ; but none of his prefaces were ever thought tedious. They have not the formality of a settled style, in which the first half of the sentence betrays the other. The clauses are never balanced, nor the periods modelled ; every word seems to drop by chance, though it falls into its proper place.¹ Nothing is cold or languid ; the whole is airy, animated, and vigorous ; what is little, is gay ; what is great, is splendid. He may be thought to mention himself too frequently ; but while he forces himself upon our esteem, we cannot refuse him to stand high in his own. Every thing is excused by the play of images and the sprightliness of expression. Though all is easy, nothing is feeble ; though all seems careless, there is nothing harsh ; and though, since his earlier works, more than a century has passed, they have nothing yet uncouth or obsolete.

“ He who writes much, will not easily escape a

¹ Pope remarked to Mr. Spence, that “ Mr. Dryden always uses proper language, natural, lively, and fitted to the subject : it is scarce ever too high or too low ; never perhaps, except in his plays.”—Spence’s ANECDOTES.

manner ; such a recurrence of particular modes as may be easily noted. Dryden is always *another and the same* ; he does not exhibit a second time the same elegancies in the same form, nor appears to have any art other than that of expressing with clearness what he thinks with vigour. His style could not easily be imitated, either seriously or ludicrously ; for, being always equable and always varied, it has no prominent or discriminative characters. The beauty who is totally free from disproportion of parts and features, cannot be ridiculed by an overcharged resemblance."

QUEEN ANNE-STREET, EAST,
April 5, 1800.



1941-1942

SOME ACCOUNT OF
THE LIFE AND WRITINGS
OF
JOHN DRYDEN.

So few are the notices which have been transmitted to us concerning the great poet whose Prose Works are here collected, that Dr. Johnson, who at an early period had meditated writing his *Life*,¹ soon abandoned the project, in despair of finding materials sufficient for his purpose. Many years afterwards, however, having undertaken a general review of the lives of the most eminent English Poets, he enriched his volumes of biography with an account of this author, in which are displayed such comprehension of mind and accuracy of criticism, such vigour of expression and luxuriance of imagery, that of the various masterly Lives in his admirable work, that of Dryden is perhaps the most animated and splendid; so splendid, indeed, that a competition with such excellence can be sought only by him who is actuated by a degree

¹ Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, vol. ii. p. 437, second edit.

of confidence in himself, which I beg leave most strenuously to disclaim. Having, however, as he himself told me, made no preparation for that difficult and extensive undertaking, not being in the habit of extracting from books and committing to paper those facts on which the accuracy of literary history in a great measure depends, and being still less inclined to go through the tedious and often unsatisfactory process of examining ancient registers, offices of record, and those sepulchres of literature, publick repositories of manuscripts, he was under the necessity of trusting much to his own most retentive memory, which furnished him with many curious and interesting particulars concerning the most famous English Poets, collected during the course of a long life; but he was frequently, as in the present instance, obliged to rely for incidents and dates, on such information as had been transmitted by preceding biographers.* Unfortunately, all the accounts of Dryden and his works were one continued tissue of inaccuracy, error, and falshood. Very little had been handed down, and of that little the greater part was untrue.

* It is observable, that when once an error has found a place in any original biographical work, it is generally transmitted from age to age by succeeding biographers and, according to a modern author, this is a very laudable mode of proceeding. To correct false dates, to ascertain the births or deaths of eminent men, the number of their children, and the nature and extent of their property, or in any other way to throw new light on their history, by

With the aid, therefore, of original and authentick documents, to rectify these mis-statements, to illustrate the history of our author's life and writings by such intelligence as I have been able to procure, and to dispel that mist of confusion and error in which it has been involved, shall be the principal object of the following pages.

JOHN DRYDEN,¹ the eldest son of Erasmus Driden, and Mary, daughter of the Rev. Henry Pickering,⁴ is supposed, on no satisfactory evi-

examining Parish-Registers, Tombstones, or Wills, the documents in the Herald's-Office, or the Inquisitions *post mortem* in the Chapel of the Rolls, is, we are told, an invasion of the sacred rights of the dead, and little less than profanation. See some idle babble to this purpose in THE PURSUITS OF LITERATURE, P.I., concerning which I shall have occasion to speak more particularly in another work.

¹ Our author's grandfather, Sir Erasmus, and his father, wrote—*Driden*, and so the poet's name is spelt in the Register of Trinity College, Cambridge, and in the University Register. He was, I believe, the first who altered the spelling of the name to *Dryden*, which is found thus annexed to some of his earliest verses, printed in 1650. His cousin-german, John Driden, of Chesterton, always adhered to the old spelling of the family name, as did his elder brother Sir Robert, the third Baronet; who was offended with our author's departure from the ancient mode. During the present century, the different branches of this family have followed the poet's orthography.—In some books of the last age the name is sometimes inaccurately written *Dreyden*, and sometimes *Dreydon*.

⁴ No mention is made of this Henry Pickering in any of the visitations of Northamptonshire that I have seen, nor is his father ascertained in the account of the Picker-

dence, to have been born on the 9th of August, 1631.⁶ He has himself told us,⁶ that he was born

ing family given in Bridges's "History of Northamptonshire," or in Collins's *BARONETAGE*. He was, however, without doubt a younger son of Sir Gilbert Pickering, Knight, who died Feb. 28, 1612-13; (Esc. 10. Jac. p. 1. n. 94.) and consequently was younger brother to Sir John Pickering, who in June, 1608, married Susanna, daughter of Sir Erasmus Driden, and died Jan. 29, 1627-8 (Esc. 4 Car. p. 4. n. 84). Mrs. Elizabeth Creed, who was herself great grand-daughter of Sir Gilbert Pickering above mentioned, states in an Epitaph which will be found in the Appendix to this Life, that Mary, our author's mother, was his grand-daughter; which she could only be by her father, Henry Pickering, being his younger son. The age too of Henry's elder brother, Sir John Pickering, agrees with this statement; for Sir John was born in April, 1583, as appears from the office found on the death of his father, (Esc. 10 Jac. ut supr.) and Henry was born in 1584, as we learn from the following inscription on his tombstone in the churchyard of Aldwinckle All-Saints, in Northamptonshire:

"Here lyeth the body of Henry Pykering, Rector of this church the space of ten years, who departed this life the - - - day of September, 1657, aged 73."

He appears to have been nominated Minister of Aldwinckle All-Saints, in 1647, in the room of the former Rector, Thomas Forth, who compounded for the first-fruits of this living, Oct. 18, 1637, and was probably ejected for *scandal* and *delinquency*, ten years afterwards, by the reformers of that time. One Henry Pickering, perhaps the son of our Henry, was of Trinity College in Cambridge, where he took the degree of B. A. in 1657,

in a village belonging to the Earl of Exeter; and according to Antony Wood,¹ that village was

He may have been the clergyman, who in 1662 was ejected for non-conformity from Barley Chapel, in Yorkshire. See Kennet's REGISTER, p. 898.

¹ Here perhaps the reader may exclaim, What I have we not the precise date of his birth inscribed on his monument, and is not this satisfactory evidence? I answer, first, that I have had frequent occasion to observe that the information furnished by tombstones is by no means implicitly to be relied on, and before this narrative is concluded, more than one instance will be given of their inaccuracy;—and further, that for the date mentioned in the text, and followed by all the biographers of Dryden for half a century, we have not even that slender and often delusive authority.—It is somewhat irregular at this early period to enter into a disquisition concerning our author's death or his tomb; but his baptismal register being either lost or not now discoverable, this mode of ascertaining the time of his birth naturally presents itself.

After Dryden's remains had long lain without any memorial, some lines written by Pope on the death of Rowe in Dec. 1718, by casting a reproach on the age in general, and particularly on those who professed to respect his memory, had such effect, that Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, his friend and patron, was by them awakened from his lethargy, and, as it should seem, from mere shame, resolved to "raise a tardy bust" in honour of this great poet. The Duke himself died, Feb. 24; 1720-21; and it appears from Bridges's HISTORY OF NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, (vol. i. p. 216,) that the monument was not erected in his life-time: so that the inscription, such as it is, does not derive any authority from him.—From a letter written by Bishop Atterbury to Pope, ap-

Aldwinckle, in Northamptonshire,⁸ which was also the birth-place of Thomas Fuller, the Historian.

parently in Sept. 1720, when the Duke was yet living, it should seem that both the design and inscription of the monument were entirely regulated by Pope. It was not, however, as has been mentioned, erected till after Buckingham's death; and Pope in a Note on an Epitaph intended for Rowe, (which note, I believe, first appeared in an edition of his works printed in 4to. in 1735.) gives the following account of it:

"The tomb of Mr. Dryden was erected upon this hint by the Duke of Buckingham, to which was originally intended this epitaph:

"This Sheffield rais'd. The sacred dust below

"Was Dryden's once: the rest who does not know?"

"which *the author since changed* into the plain inscription *now upon it*, being only the name of that great poet:

"J. DRYDEN,

"Natus Aug. 9. 1631. Mortuus Maii 1. 1701.

"JOHANNES SHEFFIELD DUX BUCKINGHAMIENSIS.
POSUIT."

Relying upon the authority of Pope, none of Dryden's biographers thought it necessary to inspect the monument; but acquiescing in his account of his own inscription, have for the last sixty years told us, that this poet was born *on the 9th of August, 1631*, and died *on the 1st of May 1701*. Let us now see what the monument itself says. The following is a literal transcript of the words inscribed on it:

"J. DRYDEN Natus 1632⁸ Mortuus
Maij 1. 1700.

Joannes Sheffield Dux Buckinghamiensis posuit.
1720."

I have in vain endeavoured to ascertain the precise time of his baptism ; * the registers of both churches

It has been observed, that when Pope appeared at the Bar of the House of Lords, on the trial of Atterbury, " he had but few words to say, and in those few he made several blunders." In his statement of this short inscription we find no less than two material errors, beside the omission of the false date at the end of it.

At the time this monument was erected, one of our author's sisters, who was then about seventy-five years old, could probably have told the exact date of his birth. Congreve too, who was yet living, might perhaps have been able to ascertain this fact. But whether either of those persons was consulted, or whether if either of them were consulted, the date furnished was that found on the monument, or that given in the inscription substituted by Pope for the true one, we have now no means of discovering. The precise time, therefore, of our author's birth must still remain involved in obscurity.

But though we derive no aid either from his tomb or parish-register, or the parochial lists of baptisms transmitted annually to the Consistory-Office at Peterborough, which have been examined on this occasion in vain, by other means the year in which he was born may be nearly ascertained. In the Preface to his FABLES, speaking of a gentleman of eighty-eight years of age, he says, " By the mercy of GOD I am already come to within twenty years of his number." This preface having probably been written in Nov. 1699, we may conclude that he was then sixty-eight complete ; which places his birth in the latter end of the year 1631. Were it not for this evidence, we might have been led by the epilogue to the First Part of THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA to suppose that he was born in 1632 or 1633. In that Epilogue,

(for there are two parishes, one denominated Aldwinckle All-Saints, and the other Aldwinckle St.

which there is good reason to believe was spoken in the middle of the year 1669, is the following line :

" This, *some years hence*, our poet's case may prove :"

and soon afterwards the author adds,

" When *forty* comes, if e'er he lives to see

" That wretched fumbling age of poetry," &c.

Who would not suppose that he was then *some years* short of forty? Yet, if he was born in 1631, he must have been then in his *thirty-eighth* year : and so says the Author of the " Reply to the Notes on THE EMPRESS OF MOROCCO," 4to, 1674. — When Congreve said, " he was an improving writer to near *seventy years of age*," he may be considered as using a round number, without attending to minute accuracy ; but if he was well informed, and meant to be correct, Dryden must have been born some time in 1630. — As his last surviving son, and one of his brothers, who both attained the title of Baronet, died at Canons-Ashby, there was ground for supposing that some book in the Library there might have ascertained this point : but it has been examined with this view, and furnishes no information.

⁶ Vol. iii. p. 562. There is here also some difficulty ; for the Earl of Exeter's estate, which was transferred about the year 1773 to Lord Lilford, lay in the parish of Aldwinckle St. Peter's : but Dryden might not have known this circumstance.

⁷ ATH. OXON. ii. 414. edit. 1781.

⁸ Aldwinckle (in Spelman's VILLARE, *Oldwinckle*.) is a straggling village, (if it should not rather be denominated two villages, Upper and Lower Aldwinckle,) situated on the western bank of the Nen, consisting of about two

Peter's,) having been carefully examined for this purpose. The latter, with which we have less concern, is perfect, but contains no baptism of any of the Driden family; and the ancient register of the parish of All-Saints is unfortunately either lost or mislaid; the earliest now extant commencing in the year 1650. The constant tradition, however, has been, that John Dryden was born in the parsonage-house of Aldwinckle All-Saints; a tradition which probably arose from his mother's father having been some time Rector of that parish: but the history of his preferment does not exactly suit with this account; for Mr. Pickering was not possessed of the benefice till sixteen years

hundred families, and comprehending part of the two parishes of All-Saints and St. Peter's. It is about a mile and a half from Tichmarsh, and near five miles from Oundle.

Some of his adversaries have represented him as an anabaptist, and Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, in the following lines makes it a question whether he ever was christened:

- " And though no wit can royal blood infuse,
- " No more than melt a mother to a Muse,
- " Yet much a certain poet undertook,
- " That men and manners deals in without book;
- " And might not more to Gospel-truth belong,
- " Than he (*if christened*) does by name of John."

PORTICAL REFLECTIONS, &c. by a Person
of Honour, folio, 1682 (but published
in 1681).

* From the information of the Rev. Mr. Chewe, of Aldwinckle. See also Bridges's HIST. OF NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, vol. ii. p. 211.

after Dryden's birth. He might, however, have been Curate of Aldwinckle All-Saints, at that period, and perhaps then rented the parsonage-house from the Rector. Were it not inconsistent with the notices which the poet himself has left us, I should rather have supposed him to have been born at Tichmarsh, where Sir Gilbert Pickering had an ancient seat, and where Erasmus Driden resided in consequence of his connexion with a branch of that house.

The stock of the family of Driden was in the county of Cumberland, not in Huntingtongshire, as Dr. Johnson supposed; an error into which he was led probably by Dr. Birch,² as that writer was by Lord Lansdowne, who, in his Reply to Burnet,³ has asserted that our author "was of a worthy family in Huntingtongshire, often serving as Representatives for that county." But the truth is, that John Driden, of Staffhill, in the county of Cumberland,⁴ early in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, or before, migrated into Northamptonshire, where by his marriage with Elizabeth, the daughter and heir of Sir John Cope, Knight, he acquired the estate of Canons-Ashby; nor had his successors any connexion whatsoever with the county of Huntingtong, till the marriage of Honor, the

² GENERAL DICT. (article DRYDEN) and ILLUSTRIOUS HEADS.

³ "Letter to the Author of Reflexions Historical and Political, &c. [Thomas Burnet, Esq.] By George Granville, Lord Lansdowne," p. 6. 4to. 1732.

⁴ MSS. Harl. 1094. 1553.

daughter and heir of Sir John Beville, of Chesterton, in that county, to our author's uncle, Sir John Driden, the second Baronet of this family, in or about 1632; from whom the Chesterton estate descended to his second son, John Driden, the poet's cousin-german; who did indeed frequently, between the years 1690 and 1707, represent the county of Huntington in parliament.

Erasmus Driden, who was the third son of Sir Erasmus Driden, of Canons-Ashby, in the county of Northampton, the first baronet of that ancient family,⁵ had by his wife already named fourteen children; viz. four sons, John, Erasmus, Henry, and James, and ten daughters; one of whom, as Oldys has recorded,⁶ was married to ——— Sher-

⁵ Sir Erasmus Driden was thirty-one years old on the 20th of Dec. 1584. (Esc. 27 Eliz. p. 1. n. 54,) and consequently was born Dec. 20, 1553. He took the degree of B. A. at Oxford, June 17, 1577, according to Antony Wood, who however does not seem to have known of what college he was a member; and as at that time young men usually went to the University at the age of thirteen or fourteen, it is extraordinary that our author's grandfather should not have obtained his first degree in arts till he was near four-and-twenty. I suspect he was originally bred at Cambridge. He was created a Baronet in 1619, and died aged 79, May 30, (not 22d, as said on his tombstone, Hist. of Northamptonshire, i. 229,) 1632. Esc. 8 Car. p. 3. n. 31. He probably derived the name of Erasmus, which long continued in his family, from his maternal uncle, Erasmus Cope, to whom perhaps Erasmus, the celebrated writer, was godfather.

⁶ Notes on Langbaine, MSS.

mardine, a bookseller in Little Britain, and Frances, the youngest, to Joseph Sandwell, a tobacconist in Newgate-street; who survived her eldest brother above thirty years, having died October 10, 1736, near ninety years old. Rose, another of the daughters, married ——— Laughton, D. D. of Catworth, in the county of Huntingdon; Agnes was the wife of Sylvester Emelyn, of Stamford, in the county of Lincoln, gentleman; Lucy of Stephen Umwell, of London, merchant; and Martha of ——— Bletso, of Northampton.—Of the other four, I have not discovered any notices. Of the sons, Erasmus, who was in trade, and resided in King-street, Westminster, succeeded at a late period of life to the title of Baronet, and died at Canons-Ashby, Nov. 3, 1718, aged eighty-two, leaving one daughter, married to ——— Shaw, and five grandsons, the eldest of whom (John) succeeded to the title; Henry went to Jamaica, where he died, leaving a son named Richard; and James, the youngest, died in the parish of St. Dunstan's in the East, in 1694, leaving two daughters.¹

Our author received the first rudiments of learning at Tichmarsh,² and probably was indebted for part of his education to the school at Oundle, in the same county; from one or the other of which places he was removed to Westminster School, where he was admitted a King's Scholar, but at what

¹ The account of our author's two younger brothers is taken from Collins's *BARONETAGE*, vol. i. p. 352.

² See the Epitaph by his kinswoman, Mrs. Elizabeth Creed, in the Appendix.

age I have not been able to ascertain;⁸ probably, however, about the time of the Civil War's breaking out, when he was near eleven years old. After remaining some years at that excellent seminary, of which the celebrated Dr. Busby had been appointed Master in 1638,⁹ he was elected

⁸ The earliest Register of elections into the college of Westminster, now extant, commences in 1663. The age of those elected was not noticed in the Register till 1708.

⁹ Dr. Richard Busby, who was born in 1607, student of Christ-Church in Oxford, in 1624, M. A. in 1631, was appointed provisional Master of Westminster School in 1638, in the room of Lambert Osbolston, who was ejected by Laud; in which office Dr. Busby was confirmed in 1639, as appears from the Chapter-Book. He died Master of the School, April 6, 1695, at the age of eighty-eight.

Locke and South, who were nearly of the same age with Dryden, Dr. Henry Stubbe, Dr. Walter Pope, Dr. John Mapletost, Henry Bagshaw, and Edward Bagshaw, who quarrelled with Busby, and in 1659 published a narrative of their differences, were his contemporaries at Westminster.

There was formerly a "faire house" at Chiswick, (the prebendal or manor-house, belonging to one of the prebendaries of St. Paul's cathedral,) which in 1593 was in possession of Dr. Goodman, Dean of Westminster, "whereunto, says Norden, (*SPECULUM BRITANNIÆ*, p. 17,) in any time of common plague or sicknes, as also to take the aire, he withdraweth the schollers of the colledge of Westminster." On the walls of this house, in which Busby, with some of his pupils, used occasionally to reside, the names of Dryden and others were a few years ago to be seen. *Lysons's ENVIRONS OF LONDON*, ii. 192.

to one of the scholarships of Trinity College, in Cambridge, where he was admitted, May 11th, 1650, under the tuition of the Rev. Mr. Templer,¹ and was matriculated on the 6th of July following.²

At this early period he commenced poet, not only by the Elegy on the death of Lord Hastings, (1649)³ mentioned by all his biographers, but by commendatory verses prefixed to the Poems of John Hoddesdon, in 1650;⁴ neither of which af-

¹ From the Register of Trinity College.—Mr. Templer afterwards became a Doctor of Divinity, and published an Answer to Hobbes, under the title of *IDEA THEOLOGICÆ LEVIATHANIS*, &c. 8vo. 1673; “a Treatise relating to the Worship of GOD,” 8vo. 1694; and some single sermons.

² *Regr. Acad. Cant.*

³ Published in a volume entitled “Tears of the Muses on the Death of Henry, Lord Hastings,” 8vo. 1649.

⁴ These verses being our author’s second attempt at poetry, hitherto discovered, and the book in which they are found, (“*Sion and Parnassus, or Epigrams on several Texts of the Old and New Testament*,” 8vo. 1650,) being uncommon, I shall subjoin them :

“*To his Friend, the Authour, on his Divine Epigrams.*

“THOU hast inspir’d me with thy soul, and I

“Who ne’er before could ken of Poetry,

“Am grown so good proficient, I can lend

“A line in commendation of my friend.

“Yet ’tis but of the second hand ; if ought

“There be in this, ’tis from thy fancy brought.

“Good thief, who dar’st, Prometheus-like, aspire,

“And fill thy poems with celestiaall fire :

forded any indication of that genius by which he was afterwards so highly distinguished.

Of his school performances we only know, that he translated the third satire of Persius, for a Thursday-night's exercise imposed by his Master, whose high opinion of his talents is strongly evinced by prescribing such a task; and he has himself told us,* that he believed it and many other exercises^b of this nature were in 1693 in the hands of Dr. Busby; but whither they have since wandered, I have not been able to learn.

- " Enliven'd by these sparks divine, their rayes
- " Adde a bright lustre to thy crown of bayes.
- " Young eaglet, who thy nest thus soon forsook,
- " So lofty and divine a course hast took,
- " As all admire, before the down begin
- " To peep, as yet, upon thy smother chin;
- " And, making heaven thy aim, hast had the grace
- " To look the sunne of righteousness i'th' face.
- " What may we hope, if thou go'st on thus fast!
- " Scriptures at first, enthusiasmes at last!
- " Thou hast commenc'd, betimes, a saint: go on,
- " Mingling diviner streams with Helicon,
- " That they who view what Epigrams here be,
- " May learn to make like, in just praise of thee.—
- " Reader, I've done, nor longer will withhold
- " Thy greedy eyes; looking on this pure gold
- " Thou'lt know adu't'rate copper, which, like this,
- " Will onely serve to be a foil to his.

" J. DRYDEN of Trin. C."

^a In his translation of Persius, fol. 1693. Sat. iii.

^b It has long been a tradition at Westminster, that

The only notice I have been able to recover concerning his early college days, is the following order, which was made about two years after his admission :

" July 19, 1652. Agreed, then, that Dryden be put out of Comons, for a fortnight at least, and that he goe not out of the colledg, during the time aforesaid, excepting to sermons, without express leave from the Master or Vice-Master ; and that at the end of the fortnight he read a confession of his crime in the hall at dinner-time at the three - - - fellowes table.

" His crime was, his disobedience to the Vice-master, and his contumacy in taking his punishment inflicted by him."

What degree of reputation he obtained in his academick course, it is now extremely difficult, if not impossible to ascertain. It has been mentioned as extraordinary, that his name is not found in any of the Cambridge Verses composed in his time on

verses on our Saviour's miracle in turning water into wine, being prescribed as an exercise, Dryden brought up the following single line :

" *Lympha pudica DEUM vidit, et erubuit.*"

But he certainly has no title to this pentameter ; for it is found, with a slight variation, in an epigram on this subject, by Richard Crashaw, published in his *EPIGRAMMATA SACRA*, 8vo. 1634. See Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, third edit. vol. iii. p. 326.

" Conclusion-Book in the Archives of Trinity College, D. 221.

publick occasions; that he took no degree in the University; and that he did not obtain a fellowship in his College.—From whatever cause it may have proceeded, he certainly was not a fellow:¹ but one of the other subjects of surprise has not been accurately stated; for he took the degree of Bachelor at the regular time, in January 1653-4,² and in 1657 was made Master of Arts,³ though in

¹ Our author's cousin, Jonathan, (son probably of that Jonathan Dryden, to whom in 1646, were consigned the profits of the vicarage of Goodrich, in Herefordshire, of which Swift's grandfather was incumbent,) was elected from Westminster School into Trinity College, in Cambridge, in 1656, and was chosen a Fellow of that College in 1662; which has occasioned some confusion on this subject. The poet never was a Fellow.—In the British Museum (MSS. Birch. 4291) is a Latin letter addressed to Dr. Busby, 31 Jan. 1659-60, and signed *Jon. Dryden*, in which way this person subscribed his Christian name; which in the printed catalogue is erroneously attributed to our author. The poems in the Cambridge Verses published in 1661, on the death of Henry, Duke of Gloucester, and Mary, Princess of Orange, and in 1662, on the marriage of Charles II. which have been ascribed to our author, were written by this Jonathan; who was in such straitened circumstances, that when he took his first degree in arts, the following order was made concerning him:

" Jan. 13, 1659. " It was concluded, that Dryden and three others, in regard of their povertie, should each have 20s. of their commencement-money abated on *taken* their batchellor of arts degree."—Conclusion-Book in the Archives of Trinity College, p. 259.

² Regr. Acad. Cant.

the University Register, owing perhaps to the irregularity of that turbulent time, his name is unaccountably omitted.

The only general Collection of either gay or lugubrious verse, that was issued out by the University of Cambridge during the unfortunate and disgraceful period of Dryden's being a member of it, appeared in 1654, under the title of *OLIVA PACIS*,¹ &c. in honour of the peace concluded

¹ In the patent creating him Poet Laureate, he is expressly styled Master of Arts; a title which he certainly would not have assumed, if he had not a right to it, as his pretensions to this distinction could at that time have been easily refuted. The Rev. Mr. Borlase, Registrar of the University of Cambridge, who obligingly, at my request, examined the list of Graduates of that University, is of opinion, that if our author ever was a Master of Arts, that degree must have been conferred on him by some other University. At Oxford, however, though once denominated by him "the Athens of his riper age," it is very improbable that he should have taken this degree, no notice of it being found in the *FASTI* of the accurate Wood.

¹ The full title is—*OLIVA PACIS ad Illustrissimum Celsissimumque OLIVERUM, Reipub. Angliæ, Franciæ, et Hiberniæ Dominum Protectorem, de Pace cum sœderatis Belgis feliciter sancita, Carmen Cantabrigiense. 4to. 1654.* On the death of the Usurper, the Cantabrigians hailed his son, Richard, in a second Collection, (now extremely scarce,) entitled—*MUSARUM CANTABRIGIENSIVM Luctus et Gratulatio: ille in funere OLIVERI Angliæ, Scotiæ, et Hiberniæ, Protectoris; hæc de RICARDI successione felicissima ad eundem. 4to. 1658.*—As

between England and Holland on the 15th of April, and ratified May 2d of that year. To this volume he might naturally be expected to have been a contributor, being then of four years' stand-

an adopted son, I am proud to add, that the University of OXFORD escaped this last disgrace; but in 1654 she was not less obsequious to ill-gotten power than her sister, and the banks of the Isis, like those of Cam, resounded with encomiastick minstrelsy. Her songs of gratulation were printed in that year under the title of—*MUSARUM OXONIENSIVM 'ΕΛΛΙΟΦΟΡΙΑ*, sive ob Fœdera, auspiciis Serenissimi OLIVERI Reipub. Ang. Scot. et Hiber. Domini Protectoris, inter rempub. Britannicam et Ordines fœderatos Belgii feliciter stabilita, gentis togata ad vada Isidis Celeusma Metricum. It was ushered to the publick by a Latin dedication to the *most serene* Oliver, by Dr. Owen, the usurping Dean of Christ-church, then Vice-Chancellor; in which he apologizes for the Oxoniats having been somewhat tardy in their encomiums.—It is painful to observe, among the contributors to this collection, the names of Ralph Bathurst, of Trinity College, and Robert South and John Locke, of Christ-church. Locke (at this time near twenty-two years old,) paid his homage in a copy of English as well as Latin verses. The latter being short, I subjoin them:

Pax regis Augusti, quem vicit Julius, orbem;

Ille ago factus clarior, ille togâ!

Hos sua Roma vocat magnos, et numina credit,

Hic quod sit mundi victor, et ille quies.

Tu bellum ut pacem populis das, unus utrisque

Major es; ipse orbem vincis, et ipse regis.

Non hominem à calo missum te credimus, unus

Sic poterat blithot qui superare dest!

ing in the University, having already commenced a poet, and one of his near relations being intimately connected with Cromwell : and here, doubtless, among the fanatick songsters of Trinity College^a his name would have been found, but for an event which happened at this time, and in all likelihood detached him from the University for some months. In June 1654, his father, who was then, I conjecture, about sixty-six years old, died,¹ and on the

^a The contributors from Trinity College were, Dr. Joseph Arrowsmith, the Master; Mr. James Dupont, G. L. P.; three of the Fellows, G. Lynnett, A. M. John Wray, (so he then wrote his name,) A. M. the celebrated traveller and botanist, and a third, of whose names the initial letters (I. V.) only are given. One under-graduate of the same college concealed himself under the signature, R. C.

¹ By the inquest of office taken at Warwick, 28 June, 1632, on the death of Sir Erasmus Driden, (Esc. 8. Car. p. 3. n. 31.) it was found, that his eldest son, John Driden, was at the time of his father's death, on the 30th of May preceding, thirty years old, and *upwards*. From this statement it should seem that he was born about the year 1600; and that our poet's father was born in 1608 or 1603. But the father of Sir Erasmus in his will, made in 1584, mentions his grandson *John*, the son of Erasmus: and if this John be the person who succeeded to the title, he must have been born in or before 1584, and in 1632 must have been at least *forty-eight*. Our poet's father, therefore, being the third son of Sir Erasmus, even if a daughter or two intervened, may be presumed to have been born in 1588—I expected to have found the entry of his baptism in the old Register of Canons-Ashby; but that, like many other ancient Registers, is lost.

18th of that month was buried at Tichmarsh.⁴ By his illness our author was probably called away from Cambridge, in May, at the very time when his contemporary gownsmen began to "build the lofty rhyme;" and their incense, it may be presumed, was presented to the Usurper in August or September, before our author's return. The settlement of his father's affairs, and the attention due to his mother and her very numerous family, must have occupied him wholly from June till after the commencement of the long vacation; and as at that season all who can, usually leave the University, his residence at Tichmarsh was probably protracted to the following October, when his gratulations, however ardent or harmonious, could have found no place in the Academick Anthology.

By the death of his father, as appears from his Will,⁵ which was made December 30th, 1652, and proved by his widow and executrix on the 23d of January, 1654-5, our author succeeded to an estate in Northamptonshire, of the extent and value of which I shall have occasion to speak more particularly hereafter. His property was not situated at Tichmarsh, as has been erroneously supposed, in consequence of Antony Wood having denominated

⁴ Register of Tichmarsh: for the examination of which I am indebted to the Rev. Mr. Powys, who, after a very troublesome search, discovered the entry above referred to; and also that respecting our poet's mother, which will be found in a subsequent page.

⁵ In the Prerogative-Office: Aylett, qu. 28.

his father, Erasmus, as of that town ; but at a small village called Blakesley, about three miles distant from Canons-Ashby. Of this estate Erasmus Driden devised two-thirds to his son John, and the other third for the term of her life, to his wife, whom he also made his residuary legatee. To his two elder daughters, Agnes and Rose, he bequeathed one hundred and fifty pounds a-piece ; to two other daughters one hundred pounds each ; to six other daughters eighty pounds each ; to his son Erasmus one hundred pounds, and to his younger sons, Henry and James, eighty pounds each : making in the whole the sum of twelve hundred and forty pounds. From the manner in which these bequests succeed each other in this instrument, it is probable that our author's parents were married about the year 1628, and that some of his sisters were elder than him.* From this Will we may also infer, (what from other circumstances is sufficiently clear,) that the maker of it was no friend to the established forms of his country ; for, instead of beginning with the usual formulary of that time, it commences in a manner different perhaps from any instrument of the same kind, either ancient or modern :—" My

* He names his children in the following order :— Agnes, Rose, Lucy, Mary, Martha, Erasmus, Elizabeth, Hester, Hannah, Abigail, Frances, Henry, James. His eldest son is not mentioned, till he disposes of his landed estate. The four daughters named before Erasmus were probably elder than him ; and he being born in 1636, and our author in 1691, perhaps one or two of his sisters were born before him.

Will is, that my daughter, Agnes, presume not to marry without her mother's consent ;"⁷ after which he proceeds to bequeath the several legacies already mentioned. He acted as a Justice of Peace,⁸ perhaps as a Committee-man, in the county of Northampton, during the Usurpation, and was probably a zealous presbyterian, as his elder brother, Sir John Driden, who desecrated the church of Canons-Ashby, certainly was.

Being now his own master, and in possession of his patrimony, for he had nearly attained his twenty-fourth year, our author had the firmness and virtue to resist the blandishments of pleasure, and all the attractions which the metropolis holds out to youthful fancy, and to return to an academick life ; in which situation, however ardent in the investigation, we shall, I fear, in vain endeavour to trace his haunts, or to discover his habits and pursuits. The early history and first flights of every literary man naturally engage our curiosity and attention ; but at the distance of a century and a half are involved in such obscurity as cannot be easily dispelled. Having already sacrificed to the

⁷ To secure obedience to this injunction, which is extended to four of her sisters also, the testator directs that the portions of such of these five daughters as married without the consent of their mother, should be considerably reduced.

⁸ In one of the Vestry-books of Aldwinckle St. Peter's is an order made by Erasmus Driden in 1653, by which he gives his sanction, as a Justice of Peace, to the appointment of a parish-officer.

Muses, he without doubt at this period wrote many verses which have perished ; and his fancy was naturally inspired and animated by those charms, to which, even on the confines of his seventieth year, he was not insensible. But of these compositions, however numerous, a few lines only remain, addressed to his cousin-german, Honor Driden, in 1655 ;⁹ to whom at that time he seems to have paid his addresses in vain. Perhaps the name of *Honor*, in one of his earliest plays, (*THE RIVAL LADIES*,) was adopted in consequence of his attachment to this inexorable beauty. Having received from this lady a present of a silver inkstand and other materials for writing, he returned her his thanks in a very gallant letter, (for so undoubtedly it was considered,) which "craved admittance to her fair hands," and which will be found at length in its proper place. As this epistle is the earliest prose composition of our author's

⁹ Honor Driden was one of the daughters of our author's uncle, Sir John Driden, the second Baronet in this family. The date of this letter, the original of which is yet extant, has been partly obliterated ; but enough remains to shew that it was written in 1655, while Dryden was yet at college. The lady, who according to tradition was a celebrated beauty, was then probably about eighteen. Her father, who died in 1658, (not in 1664, as asserted in Collins's *BARONETAGE*,) by his Will, which is in the Prerogative-Office, (Wotton, qu. 595,) and is dated Jan. 13, 1656-7, (proved Nov. 11, 1658,) left her a very large portion for that time, two thousand five hundred pounds. She all her life remained single.

now extant, and is intermingled with verse, the conclusion of it may not improperly be introduced here, and will at once furnish a specimen of his powers in either kind, at this early period of his life :

" You, Madam, (says the youthful poet,) are such a deity, that commands worship by providing the sacrifice. You are pleased, Madam, to force me to write, by sending me materials, and compel me to my greatest happiness. Yet though I highly value your magnificent present, pardon me if I must tell the world they are but imperfect emblems of your beauty ; for the white and red of wax and paper are but shadows of that vermilion and snow in your lips and forehead ; and the silver of the inkhorn, if it presume to vie whiteness with your purer skin, must confess itself blacker than the liquor it contains. What then do I more than retrieve¹ your own gifts, and present you that paper adulterated with blots, which you gave spotless ?

- " For since 'twas mine, the white hath lost its hue,
- " To shew 'twas ne'er it self, but whilst in you :
- " The virgin wax hath blush'd it self to red,
- " Since it with me hath lost its maidenhead.
- " You, fairest nymph, are wax : O, may you be
- " As well in softness as in purity !
- " Till fate and your own happy choice reveal,
- " Whom you so far shall bless, to make your seal."

¹ To *retrieve* was sometimes formerly used in the sense of—to retribute, or pay back. Coles, in his Latin Dictionary, 1679, 4to. renders it by—*recupero, instauro, de integro restituere.*

It is but just to add, that for this cluster of forced conceits, and the indelicacy of one of the images, the age, rather than the writer, is answerable. Such conceits were at that time not merely pardoned, but admired; and with the allusion no reader of either sex, however fastidious, was likely to be offended.

After residing seven years at Cambridge, about the middle of the year 1657 he removed to London.^a One of the bitterest of his adversaries has asserted, that having traduced a nobleman's son in a libel, he was obliged to quit the University from an apprehension of being expelled.^b But having excited

^a "Such," says one of our author's adversaries, "is the reasoning of a man of *seven years' standing* in Cambridge, and twice as many in Covent-Garden Coffee-house."—"Notes and Observations on THE EMPRESS OF MOROCCO, revised, 4to. 1674.—This passage affords a confirmation of what has been already stated in p. 17; for there is probably no instance of any gownsmen residing seven years in the University of Cambridge or Oxford, without taking a Master's degree.

^b "At Cambridge first your scurrilous vein began,
 "Where saucily you traduced a nobleman;
 "Who for that crime rebuked you on the head,
 "And you had been expell'd, had you not fled."

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The author, who is supposed to have been Thomas Shadwell, observes in a note, that at the Universities, noblemen's sons are called *noblemen*.

Granting for a moment that this improbable story was true, it is not very easy to discover on what ground our

great animosity by his admirable poem of **ABSA-
LOM AND ACHITOPHEL**, he was soon afterwards
assailed by an host of enemies, and among others
by the writer who produced this charge against
him ; and we are not, on the bare assertion of an
enraged antagonist, not corroborated by any con-
temporary evidence, to give credit to an invective
in which the writer was probably not so studious
of truth, as eager by any means to blacken the
character of the triumphant poet, by the wit and
acrimony of whose melodious verses Shaftesbury
and his partisans, yet writhing with smart and
vexation, were held up to publick scorn. In our
own time we have seen the most flagitious calum-
nies published by the basest of mankind against
the purest characters : judging, therefore, of the
last age by the present, we should without hesita-
tion at once reject all vague and unsupported
charges of this kind, as unworthy of the slightest
attention. In the instance before us, the lam-
pooner probably did not know how long Dryden
had remained at Cambridge. There is little occa-
sion to inquire why he quits a University, who has
resided there three years beyond the usual period.

When he settled in London, he was not without

author should have been expelled for the alleged libel.
According to the account given, he had already been
punished in a manner which ought rather to have pro-
duced some animadversion from the University on his
noble opponent than himself.

a reasonable prospect of success and advancement, his kinsman, Sir Gilbert Pickering, being a person of considerable weight at that time. This gentleman was doubly related to our author; for his father, Sir John Pickering, who died in 1628, having in 1608 married Susan, the sister of Erasmus Driden, Sir Gilbert was thus his cousin-german; and the poet's mother being the niece of Sir John Pickering, *she* was also cousin-german to Sir Gilbert. He was born in the year 1612,¹ and on the death of his father, January 29, 1627-8, succeeded to a good estate at Tichmarsh in Northamptonshire. In 1638, by the favour of that monarch whom he afterwards contributed to deprive of his life, he was created a Scottish Baronet, or, as with a superfluous precision it is frequently called, a Baronet of Nova Scotia.⁴ In both the parliaments

¹ Esc. 4 Car. p. 4. n. 84.

⁴ When the order of Baronets was first established in 1611, King James engaged that they should not exceed two hundred. However, towards the close of his reign, that number being completed, and the creation of Baronets being found a useful engine of Government, the courtier by whose influence the title was obtained receiving usually a thousand pounds for the grant, it was not lightly to be parted with. A scheme, therefore, of creating Baronets of Scotland was devised, which, it was conceived, would be no infraction of the original compact to confine the grants to a limited number; and as the English Baronets were created under the great seal of England, for the reduction of Ulster in Ireland, so the Scottish Baronets were created under the great seal of

of 1640 he represented the county of Northampton. Being a staunch adherent to what the fanatical saints of those days called the *good old cause*, having taken the Covenant, and warmly espoused all the measures pursued by the republican party during the Civil War, he was nominated one of the King's Judges in 1649, and sat twice in that illegal court by which his sovereign was murdered.* From the guilt of their final sentence, however, he was free, having had either the moderation or the prudence to withdraw himself from that wicked and sanguinary tribunal on the third day of their publick sitting. Yet he afterwards adhered to the

Scotland, for the reduction of Acadia, or Nova Scotia. The scheme, however, was not carried into execution by King James; but early in the reign of his successor several Scottish Baronets were made; and about the year 1631 the number of English Baronets then amounting to near three hundred, it was thought indecent to proceed further in breach of the engagement made by King James, and such Englishmen as sought this title between that period and 1640, were made Baronets of Scotland. Afterwards, however, Charles became less scrupulous, and *English* Baronets were created as usual, so as to amount at his death to the number of 458.

From this statement it appears, that there is no more necessity for calling a Baronet created under the great seal of Scotland, (whether he be an Englishman or Scotchman,) a *Baronet of Nova Scotia*, than there is to denominate one created under the great seal of England, a *Baronet of Ulster*.

* Com. Journ. vol. viii. p. 60.

flagitious Cromwell in every change of government; and continued to sit for Northamptonshire in the three Parliaments which he summoned; in the little or Barebones' Parliament, which met in 1653; and in those which were assembled in 1654 and 1656. The manner in which he was chosen a member for Northamptonshire in the Parliament of 1656, as related by an eye-witness, is worthy of particular notice: "The freeholders, by the appointment of Major-General Butler, were assembled at Kettering Heath, and the Sheriff having read the writ, the Major-General named himself and the five following gentlemen; Sir Gilbert Pickering, Mr. Crewe the younger, the Lord Cleypole, James Langham, Esq. and Major Blake. Having first named Sir Gilbert, he rode round the heath, crying—A PICKERING, A PICKERING; and coming to the Sheriff, he ordered him to set him down duly elected. The other five were successively returned in the same manner. At the same time Colonel Benson, with a large body of electors, was on the Heath, and proposed, without any notice being taken of his nomination, Mr. Knightley and other considerable gentlemen of the county."—Such was the liberty enjoyed under the domination of those men, who for fourteen years had clamourously asserted, that they had no other object in view but the maintenance and security of the ancient fundamental rights of the people of England.

¹ Bridges's HIST. OF NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, vol. ii. p. 383.

A modern writer has stated that Sir Gilbert Pickering was also a military commander of considerable reputation in those unhappy times; but this is a mistake. The person who very highly distinguished himself as an officer in various engagements,—at the battle of Naseby, in the storming of Bristol, and at the taking of Basing-house,—was Colonel John Pickering, a younger brother of Sir Gilbert, who raised a regiment in Northamptonshire, (which was called by his name,) and, after many gallant actions, died of what was then called *the new disease*, at St. Mary Austrè or Ottery, a town in Devonshire, in November 1645.* Sir Gilbert himself, though without doubt he assisted his brother in raising his regiment, moved only in a civil sphere. He was so closely connected with Cromwell, that he was constantly invested with such authority as that Usurper permitted his partisans to exercise. He was one of the thirty-eight Counsellors of State named by the Rump Parliament, to supply the place of the executive power after the murder of the King. When the little Parliament surrendered the government into the hands of Cromwell in December 1653, and it was resolved, “after several days *seeking the*

* ENGLAND'S RECOVERY, &c. by Joshua Sprigge; folio, 1647, p. 155. Colonel John Pickering, like several of the eminent men of that time, (Lord Falkland, Chillingworth, John Hales, &c.) was a very little man, but much distinguished for his bravery.

Lord, in order to a settlement and *sweet composure*, that his Excellency the Lord General should be appointed Lord Protector, with a Council of twenty-one godly, able, and discreet persons to assist him,"⁹ Sir Gilbert Pickering was appointed one of that body; and he continued a member of the Usurper's Council to the time of Oliver's death, with a salary of £.1000 a year. He was also Lord Chamberlain of his mock court, and High Steward of Westminster, with emoluments annexed to each of those offices; and, in 1658, was a member of his other House, or House of Lords.¹

⁹ "Copy of the Letter from his Excellency the Lord General Cromwell, sent to the Members of Parliament called to take upon them the trust of the government of this Commonwealth, which began on Monday the 4th of June 1653: - - - with the several transactions from that time." 4to. 1656, p. 16.

¹ In a very scarce pamphlet in my Collection, entitled—"A Second Narrative of the late Parliament, &c." 4to. 1658, which was evidently written by one of the Fifth-Monarchy men, who were extremely enraged at Cromwell's having formed a House of Lords, I find (p. 13.) the following description of this gentleman:

"Sir Gilbert Pickering, Knight of the old stamp, and of considerable revenue in Northamptonshire; one of the long Parliament, and a great stickler in the change of the Government from Kingly to that of a Commonwealth:—helped to make those laws of treason against Kingship; has also changed with all changes that have been since. He was one of the little Parliament, and helped to break it, as also of all the Parliaments since: is one of

Under the countenance and protection of this near and powerful kinsman, our author made his first entrance into the metropolis, and is said by one of his adversaries to have been his clerk or secretary,^a and also a member of one of the nume-

the Protector's Council, (his salary £. 1000 *per annum*, besides other places,) and as if he had been pinned to this sieve, was never to seek: is become High Steward of Westminster; and being so finical, spruce, and like an old courtier, is made Lord Chamberlain of the Protector's Household or Court; so that he may well be counted fit and worthy to be taken out of the House to have a negative voice in the other House, though he helped to destroy it in the King and Lords. There are more besides him, that make themselves transgressors by building again the things which they once destroyed."

Cromwell's House of Lords consisted of sixty-two persons, but not more than forty-five sat; among whom were Pride the Drayman, and Hewson the Cobler.

^a As the pamphlet containing the particulars here noticed is now seldom met with, it may be proper, instead of referring to it, to transcribe a few lines from it:

- " The next step of advancement you began
- " Was being clerk to NOLL's Lord Chamberlain,
- " A sequestrator and committee-man;
- " There all your wholesome morals you suck'd in,
- " And got your genteel gaiety and mien.
- " Your loyalty you learn'd in Cromwell's Court,
- " Where first your Muse did make her great effort:
- " On him you first shew'd your poetick strain,
- " And prais'd *his opening the basilick vein*;
- " And were it possible to come again,
- " Thou on that side would draw thy slavish pen."

THE MEDAL OF JOHN BAYES, 4to. 1682.

rous Committees appointed in various counties for the detection and punishment of those loyal persons who were then denominated **MALIGNANTS**, and for the purpose of sequestering their estates, and the benefices of such of the Clergy as refused to take the Covenant, or to comply with the injunctions of the Directory.¹ Another of his opponents, Villiers,

It is not quite clear whether the words—"A sequestrator and Committee-man," were intended to be applied to Dryden, or to Noll's Lord Chamberlain; but I think the former was the author's meaning.

Again, in another poem, (which seems to have originally appeared in 1687, and is re-printed in a Miscellaneous Collection by R. Cross, 8vo. 1747.) entitled "**THE PROTESTANT SATIRE, or some Reason, not all Rhyme,**" &c.

"He honest kept as long as e'er he could,

"But glitt'ring guineas cannot be withstood,

"And **BAYES** was of *Committee-man's* flesh and blood."

Here also there is some ambiguity; for the last line may relate either to his father or himself.

The couplet alluded to in the first of the foregoing extracts, is in our author's Verses on Cromwell:

"He fought, to end our fighting, and essay'd

"To staunch the blood by *breathing of the vein.*"

¹ "Those factious and puritannical Ministers, (says Walker in his "Attempt towards recovering an Account of the Number and Sufferings of the Clergy," &c. fol. 1715. Pref.) who had revolted to the Parliament, and were by them thrust into as many pulpits as they could fill, had it in their instructions to traduce the Episcopal Ministers as papists, or popishly affected, and to represent

Duke of Buckingham, with more probability, asserts, that his father was a Committee-man.⁴ Great

them to the people as lazy, idle, ignorant curates, enemies to godliness, and overrun with the foulest and grossest immoralities. As this poison worked throughout the kingdom, Committees were appointed in parliament for imprisoning and sequestering those *ignorant and scandalous* (that is—loyal and episcopal) Ministers. These made a considerable progress with the best of the Clergy. But for the greater ease and encouragement of informers, and thereby to complete the reformation, it was judged farther necessary to erect Committees in all the counties, cities, and greater towns, in the kingdom; and to furnish them with a power of sequestering as well the temporals (whether real or personal) as the spirituals of the **MALIGNANT CLERGY**; which was accordingly done. And this work prospered so well in their hands, that soon after they proceeded to abolish the church-government itself, to put down all the cathedrals, and to seize the whole revenues of those ancient and learned bodies. Nor did they stop here; but diverse other sorts of Committees and Commissioners were from time to time appointed, as well to perfect the ruin of the clergy, as to purge the Universities of all persons who had any pretence either to learning or loyalty. Both which purposes they so far effected by a continued course of well near *twenty years' persecution*, that errors, heresies, and blasphemies without number, filled many of the pulpits; and the Ministry itself was deemed at last anti-Christian."

In like manner Committees were appointed in every county for the sequestration of the estates of *lay delinquents*, as they were termed; and the sequestrators of each kind had salaries. These Committees, in their persecution of the laity as well as the clergy, were guilty of the greatest

enormities certainly were practised by persons invested with that office; but Dryden being ac-

injustices and oppression. As soon as the property of a **MALIGNANT**, that is, of a loyalist, was ascertained, he was thrown into prison; which was so common a practice that Roger Coke says, (*DETECTION*, vol. ii. p. 65.) he believes his "father was the only man in England who was sequestered without being imprisoned." From this confinement the loyalist was never liberated but on the condition of paying a considerable fine, which was often two years' revenue of his estate, and sometimes much more.—The iniquity of the proceedings of these petty tyrants, in dividing among themselves the property of such loyalists as refused to take the Covenant, is painted with great accuracy in Sir Robert Howard's comedy entitled **THE COMMITTEE**. What enormities were practised in the sequestration of livings, may be seen in Walker's *Sufferings of the Clergy*, from p. 63 to p. 97, and in Ryves's **MERCURIUS RUSTICUS**. See there particularly the case of Thomas Swift, Vicar of Goodrich, in Herefordshire, whose wife (a kinswoman of our author,) was robbed by one of these sequestrators of all her household goods, some of which she repurchased from her plunderer, and then she was pillaged a second time of the very articles for which she had compounded.

* "POETICAL REFLECTIONS on a poem entitled **ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL**, by a Person of Honour," (who according to Antony Wood, was Villiers, Duke of Buckingham,) appeared in December 1681.—This poem, which is so extremely scarce that I have never seen but one copy of it, opens with the following lines, which I subjoin in confirmation of the fact stated above, and as a specimen of his Grace's genuine *unscrutched* poetry:

knowledge by his contemporaries to have possessed much good nature and philanthropy, I am willing to believe that if ever he did execute such an office, his cares were directed rather to restrain and qualify the excesses of others, than in any way to contribute to them. He is at this time also said to have successively favoured the sects of anabaptists and independents;" which, considering

- " When late Protectorship was canon-proof,
- " And cap-a-pè had seiz'd on Whitehall roof,
- " And next on Israelites durst look so big,
- " That, Tory-like, it lov'd not much the Whig,
- " A poet there starts up, of wondrous fame ;
- " Whether Scribe or Pharisee, his race doth name :
- " Or more to intrigue the metaphor of man,
- " Got on a Muse by *father Publican*.*
- " For 'tis not harder much, if we tax nature,
- " That lines should give a poet such a feature,
- " Than that his verse a hero should us shew,
- " Produced by such a feat, as famous too.
- " His mingle such, what man presumes to think
- " But he can figures daub with pen and ink."

At this rate his Grace proceeds through ten folio pages, containing three hundred and fifteen lines.

The Duke of Buckingham came from France into England in 1657, and then married the daughter of Thomas, Lord Fairfax, by whose interest he redeemed his great estate from the hands of sequestrators :—so that he is good evidence for the fact mentioned in the text.

Dr. Johnson doubted whether Derrick had any authority for mentioning this circumstance. His authority

* A Committee-man.—*Original Note.*

his family connexions, is not improbable. Thus circumstanced, we see that one of his earliest

was probably the lampoons of the last age. Thus in *THE LAUREATE*, a poem, first published in folio in October 1687, and reprinted in the *STATE POEMS*, vol. ii. p. 129:

" Had Dick still kept the regal diadem,
 " Thou had'st been Poet Laureate unto him;
 " And long ere now in lofty verse proclaim'd
 " His high extraction among princes fam'd;
 " Nay, had our Charles by heaven's severe decree
 " Been found and murder'd in the royal tree,
 " Even thou had'st prais'd the fact:—his father slain
 " Thou call'dst but gently *breathing of a vein*.
 " Tell me, for 'tis a truth you must allow,
 " Who ever chang'd more in one moon than thou?
 " Even thy own Zimri was more stedfast known,
 " He had but one religion, or had none.
 " What sect of Christians is't thou hast not known,
 " And at one time or other made thy own?
 " A bristled *baptist* bred; and then thy strain
 " Immaculate, was free from sinful stain:
 " No songs in those blest times thou did'st produce,
 " To brand and shame good manners out of use. . . .
 " Next thy dull Muse, an *independent* jade,
 " On sacred tyranny fine stanzas made;
 " Prais'd Noll, who even to both extremes did run,
 " To kill the father, and dethrone the son."

So, in *THE PROTESTANT SATIRE*, &c. *ut supr.*

" Thus needy Bayes, his Rose-street aches past,
 " By fate enlighten'd, Tory turns at last;
 " Though *bred a saint*, he was not born to fast."

See also Langbaine's "Account of the Dramatick Poets,"

poetical compositions, the "Heroick Stanzas on the death of Oliver Cromwell," with which his poli-

p. 139: "He [our author] has ridiculed the several professions of the Lutherans, Calvinists, Presbyterians, Huguenots, Anabaptists, Independents, Quakers, &c. though I must observe by the way, that some people among the persuasions here mentioned might justly have expected better usage from him, on account of *his old acquaintance* in the year 1659."

The characters of some of his relations, as transmitted by their contemporaries, adds probability to this representation. I allude particularly to the characters of Sir Gilbert Pickering, already mentioned, and Sir John Driden, (the elder brother of Erasmus, our author's father,) as given by Jeremiah Stephens, (Rector of Wotton and Quinton, in Northamptonshire, and the learned assistant of Spelman in the publication of the COUNCILS,) in his Account of the Northamptonshire Committee of Sequestration, which Walker has printed in his *SUFFERINGS OF THE CLERGY*, P. I. p. 91, from the manuscript papers of that gentleman:

"Sir G—— P—— had an uncle whose ears were cropt for a libel on Archbishop Whitgift: was first a presbyterian, then an independent, then a Brownist, and afterwards an anabaptist. He was a most furious, fiery, implacable man; was the principal agent in casting out most of the learned clergy; a great oppressor of the country; got a good manor for his booty of the E. of R. and a considerable purse of gold by a plunder at Lynn in Norfolk."

Sir J—— D——n was never noted for ability or discretion; was a *puritan* by tenure, his house being an ancient college, where he possessed the church, and abused most part of it to profane uses: the chancel he turned to a barn; the body of it to a corn-chamber and

tical adversaries never ceased to reproach him, was not so much a voluntary effusion, as a tribute of

storehouse, reserving one side aisle of it for the publick service of prayers, &c. He was noted for weakness and simplicity, and never put on any business of moment, but was very furious against the clergy."

Mr. Stephens having been used by the Northamptonshire Committee with great cruelty and injustice, some little allowance must be made for the high colouring of these portraits.

The epithet here given to Sir Gilbert Pickering is again applied to him in a song of the last age, entitled *The Rump vindicated*, &c.—LOYAL SONGS, vol. ii. p. 108.

"I wonder who first call'd the parliament *Rump*,

"Some say that it was Jack Hobby;

"And some *firy* P[ickering]: good wits will jump,"
&c.

Being living when this song was originally published, the initial letter of his surname only was set down in the printed copy.

Sir Gilbert Pickering, as appears from the Journals of the House of Commons, was in 1649 a member of the Committee for *scandalous Ministers*; which, according to Walker, (*SUFFERINGS OF THE CLERGY*, P. I. p. 61,) "did beyond all other Committees whatsoever, as long as they continued, harrass and oppress the regular clergy."—I find, by an Act of Cromwell made in 1654, by and with the consent of his Council, (Scobel's Acts, P. II. p. 335,) "to the end that a *godly and painful ministry* might be established," he was appointed one of the Commissioners for the county of Northampton (together with Sir John Dreydon, as he is there called, and some others who are characterized by Mr. Stephens,) "for the ejection

duty and gratitude to his kinsman and benefactor, a rigid puritan, a determined enemy of monarchy and the episcopal church, and an intimate friend

of scandalous, ignorant, and insufficient ministers and schoolmasters."

In the eighth of the following lines in the **PROTESTANT SATIRE**, it is not clear whether the writer alludes to our author's grandfather, Sir Erasmus Driden, who from the course which his sons pursued may be supposed to have been a puritan, or to Henry Pickering, his maternal grandfather, who was certainly a pastor of the true fanatical stamp, and one of the elect, having had possession of the Rectory of Aldwinckle All-Saints from 1647 till his death in 1657, probably by the ejection of some honest and loyal clergyman of the church of England. The person alluded to in the tenth line is certainly Sir Gilbert Pickering :

" But though he spares no waste of words or conscience,
 " He wants the Tory turn of thorough nonsense,
 " That thoughtless air that makes light Hodge so jolly ;—
 " Void of all wright, *he* wantons in his folly.
 " Not so forced **BAYES**, whom sharp remorse attends,
 " While his heart loaths the cause his tongue defends ;
 " Hourly he acts, hourly repents the sin,
 " And is all over *grandfather* within :
 " By day that ill-laid spirit checks,—o' nights
 " Old Pickering's ghost; a dreadful spectre, frights.
 " Returns of spleen his slacken'd speed remit,
 " And cramp his loose careers with intervals of wit:
 " While, without stop at sense, or ebb of spite,
 " Breaking all bars, bounding o'er wrong and right,
 " Contented Roger gallops out of sight."

By Hodge, and Roger, was meant Sir Roger L'Estrange.

and counsellor of the Usurper. They were first published separately in the beginning of the year 1659, and afterwards united with the Verses of Waller and Sprat on the same occasion.⁶

After the death of Cromwell, Sir Gilbert Pickering signed the instrument for proclaiming his son Richard, was one of his Council of Fourteen, and sat as a member of his House of Lords, till they were dispersed by Lambert in April 1659. Afterwards, though strongly attached to Fleetwood, he does not appear to have had any publick trust, being neither a member of the Council of State nor Committee of Safety, which in the course of that year represented the executive power. When the Restoration took place, it appears from the Commons' Journals that he presented a Petition to the House, and after debate, it was resolved that he should be "excepted out of the Act of general pardon and oblivion, in respect only of such pains, penalties, and forfeitures, (not extending to life,) as

⁶ The Stanzas on Cromwell, I suppose, were published separately in 1659, but I have never seen an original edition of them in that form. On the 20th of Jan. 1658-9, Henry Herringman entered in the Stationers' Register "a book called Three Poems to the happy Memory of the most renowned Oliver, late Protector; by Mr. Marvell, Mr. Dryden, and Mr. Spratt." The work, however, was published in 4to. in that year, not by Herringman, but William Wilson, and contains no poem by Marvell, but one by Waller; nor have I ever seen any verses by Marvell on Oliver's death.

should be thought fit to be inflicted on him by another act to be passed for that purpose." By the Act of Indemnity (12 Car. II. c. xi.) he was declared incapable of exercising any office ecclesiastical, civil, or military ; but suffered in no other respect, owing, it may be presumed, to the interference of Edward Montague, whose sister he had married, and who in June 1660 was created Earl of Sandwich. Having thus escaped the storm, he retired to his native county, where he died at Tichmarsh in 1668.

After the publication of the verses on Cromwell, our author probably was not idle, though nothing of his composition is now known to have been published subsequent to that poem, and previous to the King's return. That event, as might have been expected, excited every man who had ever penned a stanza to join in the general gratulation ; and in consequence the poetical pieces published on that occasion were so numerous, that they would fill a volume. Our author, with several other delinquents, readily sung his *palinode*, under the title of "*ASTRÆA REDUX*, a poem on the happy Restoration of his most sacred Majesty ;" which was printed in folio in 1660 ;⁷ and hoped, without doubt, by the fervour of loyalty to efface all memory of his former misdoings. His adversaries, however, took care that they should not be

⁷ Com. Journ. vol. viii. p. 60 ;—9 June, 1660.

⁸ Probably in June ; but I do not find it entered in the Stationers' Register.

forgotten, by carefully reprinting, in Dec. 1681,⁹ his antimonarchical stanza^o, which it is observable he never enumerated in the list of his works.

He is represented by his enemies to have been at this time a mere literary drudge under Herringman, an eminent bookseller; to have been so poor as to be obliged to dine at a threepenny ordinary;¹ and to have continued in this state till he was raised to ease and plenty by the bounty of Sir Robert Howard, who is said to have generously supported him at his own house.² But some of

⁹ They were printed in a broad sheet, (which is in Antony Wood's study in the Ashmolean Museum, in Oxford,) under the title of—"An Elegy on the Usurper Oliver Cromwell, by the author of *ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL*, published to shew the loyalty and integrity of the poet."

¹ "Reasons of Mr. Bayes's changing his Religion," by T. Brown, P. I. p. 14. 4to. 1688.

² "But he being dead, who should the slave prefer?

"He turn'd a journeyman to a bookseller:

"Writ prefaces to books for meat and drink,

"And as he paid, he would both write and think:

"Then by the assistance of a noble knight,

"Thou had'st plenty, ease, and liberty to write:

"First like a gentleman he made thee live,

"And on his bounty thou did'st amply thrive."

THE MEDAL OF JOHN BAYES, 4to. 1682. p. 8.
On the word, *bookseller*, the following note is added:—"Mr. Herringman, who kept him at his house for this purpose." And, as a comment on the words—"a noble knight," we find—"Sir R. H. who kept him generously at his own house."

these assertions were made at random, in consequence of these lampooners being ignorant of his real circumstances at that time, and cannot be wholly true; for the patrimony of which he was then possessed, though a very moderate provision, certainly placed him above a state of mean dependence. He probably did lodge for some time at the house of Herringman, who was Sir Robert Howard's publisher, as well as his own, and lived in what was then called the New Exchange;¹ and on that slight foundation, and the early friendship which subsisted between Dryden and Howard, this tale seems to have been built. His connexion with Sir Robert Howard commenced in or before 1660; he having in April in that year prefixed some encomiastick verses to a collection of Howard's poems which was then published.⁴ Our author has himself acknowledged that "he was many ways obliged to that gentleman, and that he had been alike careful of his fortune and reputation."⁵ The intimacy that subsisted between them at this period, which afterwards suffered a temporary suspension, probably was the occasion of Dryden's being made acquainted with his sister, Lady

¹ Henry Herringman was at this time the principal publisher of poetry and plays. Almost all the numerous poems on the subject of the Restoration were issued from his shop.

⁴ Sir Robert Howard's poems were entered in the Stationers' Books by H. Herringman, April 16, 1660.

⁵ ANNUS MIRABILIS. Pref.

Elizabeth, one of the daughters of Thomas, the first Earl of Berkshire, to whom he was married in or before 1665,⁶ with circumstances, as Dr. Johnson has observed, not very honourable to either of the parties ; which, as they are supported by no other evidence than the lampoons of a subsequent period, may be more properly consigned to oblivion, than minutely and particularly stated. Certain, however, it is, that our author has sometimes represented the matrimonial state in no very favourable light,⁷ though his adversaries have

⁶ In this and every other particular relating to our author, I have endeavoured to obtain the best evidence that now can be procured. With this view, the Lord Bishop of Salisbury, at my request, obligingly desired the Register of Charlton in Wiltshire to be examined, where I thought it very probable that the marriage of Dryden to Lady Elizabeth Howard, had been recorded ; or at least that the baptism of their eldest son, Charles, would have been found. But neither that register, nor the register of the neighbouring parish of Westport, contain any notice of either of these facts ; nor do the parochial Lists of Marriages and Baptisms transmitted annually to the Consistory-Office at Salisbury, afford any aid on this subject.—However, it appears from the admission of Charles Dryden to Trinity College in Cambridge, in June 1683, at which time he was seventeen years old, that his parents must have been married in or before 1665.—A transcript of his admission from the college-register, in which he is said to have been *born at Charlton*, will be found in a subsequent page.

⁷ See particularly the opening of *ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL*, printed in 1681, and the Verses addressed

ascribed to him one more passage of this kind than he ever wrote.*

In the middle of the next year (1661) he addressed a panegyrick to his Majesty on his Coronation,⁹ and on New-year's day, 1662, presented an encomiastick poem to Lord Chancellor Clarendon. In the following year he prefixed to his friend Dr. Charleton's Account of Stonehenge some elegant lines,¹ in which we find more vigour

to his kinsman, John Driden, of Chesterton, in 1699:
" Lord of yourself," &c.

* In a copy of anonymous verses prefixed to Creech's translation of Lucretius, 8vo. 1683, are the following lines:

" Quit not for publick toils a college life,
" Nor take that kind of settlement, a wife."

These verses were in the last age by some ascribed to Dryden, (see the Second Part of " the Reasons of Mr. Bayes's Conversion," p. 34.) and by others to Bishop Spratt. But Fenton, in his Notes on Waller, 4to. 1730, p. lxxviii. assures us, that he had good reason to believe they were written by a person then living, " who, though he had conversed familiarly with the best poets of our nation for almost half a century, never professed himself a member of the faculty." " His name, (he adds,) I am obliged to conceal."

⁹ Printed in folio for H. Herringman, in 1660. The verses addressed to Lord Chancellor Clarendon were also published by him in the same form, in the following year.

¹ This " Epistle to his honoured friend Dr. Charleton, on his learned works, but more particularly on his Trea-

than in either of the preceding pieces, and much of that copiousness, animation, and harmony, for which his poetical compositions were afterwards

tise of Stonehenge, by him restored to its true Founder," being short, and having been little noticed, though it exhibits the rudiments of almost all Dryden's future excellencies, I shall subjoin it, as a specimen of his poetical powers at this period. The versification is little inferior to that of his most perfect works :

- " THE longest tyranny that ever sway'd
- " Was that wherein our ancestors betray'd
- " Their free-born reason to the Stagyrite,
- " And made his torch their universal light.
- " So truth, while only one supply'd the state,
- " Grew scarce, and dear, and yet sophisticate.
- " Still it was bought, like emp'rick wares, or charms ;
- " Hard words scal'd up with Aristotle's arms.
- " COLUMBUS was the first that shook his throne,
- " And found a temp'rate in a torrid zone :
- " The fev'rish air fann'd by a cooling breeze,
- " The fruitful vales set round with shady trees ;
- " And guiltless men, who danc'd away their time,
- " Fresh as their groves, and happy as their clime.
- " Had we still paid that homage to a name
- " Which only GOD and Nature justly claim,
- " The western seas had been our utmost bound,
- " Where poets still might dream the sun was drown'd ;
- " And all the stars that shine in southern skies
- " Had been admir'd by none but savage eyes.
- " Among the asserters of free reason's claim,
- " Our nation's not the least in worth or fame :
- " The world to BACON does not only owe
- " Its present knowledge, but its future too :

distinguished. The former two are, I think, the only papers of verses now extant, written after the poem on the Restoration, and before the commencement of his theatrical career. He now doubtless had attained a considerable degree of

- " GILBERT shall live, till loadstones cease to draw,
- " Or British fleets the boundless ocean awe ;
- " And noble BOYLE, not less in nature seen,
- " Than his great brother read in states and men :
- " The circling streams, once thought but pools of blood,
- " (Whether life's fuel, or the body's food,)
- " From dark oblivion HARVEY's name shall save ;
- " While ENT keeps all the honour that he gave.
- " Nor are you, learned friend, the least renown'd,
- " Whose fame, not circumscribed with English ground,
- " Flies like the nimble journeys of the light,
- " And is, like that, unspent too in its flight.
- " Whatever truths have been, by art or chance,
- " Redeem'd from error or from ignorance,
- " Thin in their authors, like rich veins of ore,
- " Your works unite, and still discover more :
- " Such is the healing virtue of your pen,
- " To perfect cures on books, as well as men.
- " Nor is this work the least : you well may give
- " To men new vigour, who make stones to live.
- " Through you, the Danes, their short dominion lost,
- " A longer conquest than the Saxons boast.
- " STONEHENGE, once thought a temple, you have found
- " A throne, where Kings, our earthly gods, were crown'd ;
- " Where by their wond'ring subjects they were seen,
- " Joy'd with their stature, and their princely mien.
- " Our sovereign here above the rest might stand,
- " And here be chose again to rule the land.

reputation, and was so much respected, as to be chosen a member of the newly instituted Royal Society, November 19th, 1662.^a

It has frequently been mentioned as a matter of surprise, that he should have been so far advanced in life, before he was celebrated for his poetical or dramatick talents :

“ Great Dryden did not early great appear,

“ Faintly distinguish'd in his thirtieth year ;—

says one of his successors in the Laureate's chair.^b

Gildon, Jacob, and others, have made the same observation. “ It may be presumed, (says Jacob) that his genius did not lead him early to poetry, by reason he was above thirty years old, before he obliged the world with his first dramatick performance.” But these writers seem not to have recollected the iron age on which it was our author's fortune to be thrown ; and that during

“ These ruins shelter'd once his sacred head,

“ When he from Wor'ster's fatal battle fled ;

“ Watch'd by the Genius of this royal place,

“ And mighty visions of the Danish race.

“ His refuge then was for a temple shown :

“ But, he restor'd, 'tis now become a throne.”

Of Gilbert, now little known, some account, and an engraved portrait, may be found in THE BIOGRAPHICAL MIRROR, by S. HARDING, vol. ii. pp. 33, 136, 4to. 1798.

^a Birch's HIST. OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY, vol. i. p. 126. He was admitted Nov. 26th.

^b Verses addressed to Lord Halifax in 1709, by Laurence Eusden.

earlier years of manhood, England was groaning under the scourge of usurpation, tyranny, plunder, confiscation, and oppression of every kind; circumstances little favourable to the exercise of poetical talents in any form. As for the drama in particular, are we to wonder that he wrote no plays, when dramattick productions were not permitted to be exhibited, or, to use our author's words, "when tragedies and comedies were forbidden, because they contained some matter of scandal to those *good people* who could more easily dispossess their lawful sovereign than endure a wanton jest?" for such, as is well known, was the case from 1642 to 1660; during which gloomy period all memory of scenick entertainments might have been effaced from men's minds, had not the necessities of the actors compelled them occasionally and by stealth to represent some of their old plays in the houses of those noblemen who were their patrons.* As soon as the restoration of monarchy brought back to the people, with all its other blessings, those rational amusements with which their ancestors from a very early period had been indulged, Dryden, as he has himself told us, attempted dramattick poesy. "In the year of his Majesty's happy Restoration," says he, "the first play I undertook was *THE DUKE OF GUISE*, as the fairest way which the Act of Indemnity had then left us of setting forth the rise of the late rebellion, and by exploding the

* HIST. HISTRION. 8vo, 1699, p. 9.

villainies of it upon the stage, to precaution posterity against the like errors."¹ He applied, therefore, to dramatick poesy, as soon as any benefit could be derived either to himself or others from such an exercise of his talents; and had he lived in happier times, and seen rival wits daily contending for publick favour, who can say that he would not some years before this period have been among the foremost and most eager candidates for dramatick fame? The friends, however, whom he consulted, thought his first essay for the stage not wrought with sufficient art to promise success, and the piece was laid aside for several years.

His next scenick performance was *THE WILD GALLANT*, a comedy which he calls "his first attempt in dramatick poesy;" by which it is clear from the preceding passage he must mean—the first which was exhibited in the theatre. On the restoration of the stage, dramatick entertainments of any kind were probably so eagerly followed, that the two companies of comedians then subsisting, the King's Servants and those of the Duke of York, had little occasion for novelty; and the old plays of Jonson, Fletcher, and Shirley, (for Shakspeare appears to have been little regarded,) for some time had sufficient attraction, without any aid from the modern poets. From this, or some other cause now not discoverable, *THE WILD GALLANT* was not, I believe, produced on the

¹ Vindication of the Duke of Guise, vol. ii. p. 71.

stage till Feb. 1662-3. Among the curious papers of Sir Henry Herbert, who, as Master of the Revels, for a few years after the Restoration exercised some kind of authority over the theatre, (from which several extracts are given in the *History of the Stage*,)^a it might have been expected that some notice would have been found that might ascertain the precise time when this and some other of our author's plays were first exhibited; but the lists which these papers furnish, do not contain any of Dryden's pieces, at least by name. However, I have no doubt that this his first play was performed by the King's company at the time above mentioned, in their theatre in Vere-street; for they did not remove to Drury-Lane till April 1663. The following lines in the original prologue to this play denote that the theatres had been opened for some time before its production, and that dramattick entertainments were then become familiar. *Now*, says the poet,

" ——— your love and hatred judge, not you,
 " And cruel factions, bribed by interest, come,
 " Not to weigh merits, but to give their doom."

A season or two must necessarily have elapsed, and the several pretensions of the dramattick poets have been canvassed and weighed against each other, before these factions could have arisen and

^a *PLAYS AND POEMS OF SHAKESPEARE*, vol. i. p. ii. pp. 266, 267. 8vo. 1790.

been embodied. In the same prologue one of the Astrologers observes of the piece,

"It should have been but one continued song,
"Or at the least a dance of three hours long:"

referring probably to Sir William D'Avenant's *SIEGE OF RHODES*, an opera, with which the Duke of York's Servants, under his management, opened their new theatre in spring 1662,⁷ and which doubtless continued to be frequently acted in the course of the following winter.⁸ At this time our author was patronised by the celebrated Barbara

⁷ It was acted twelve days successively with great applause. Downes's *ROSC. ANGL.* p. 21.

⁸ The following couplet in the same Prologue,

"He would have wish'd it better for your sakes,
"But that in plays he finds you love *mistakes*—"

certainly alludes to the numerous mistakes of *Teague* in Sir Robert Howard's comedy called *THE COMMITTEE*, which was then extremely popular. After *Teague* has knock'd down the bookseller, and *taken* the Covenant, according to his notion of taking it, Colonel Careless says—"This fellow, I prophecy, will bring me into many troubles by his *mistakes*." So again, in Act iii. sc. 1. *TEAGUE*. "Well, that is all one, is it not? If *he* would take any counsel, or *you* would take any counsel, is not that all one then?"—*COL. CARE*. "Was there ever such a *mistake*?"—Again, *ibid.* *LIEUT.* "Come, *Teague*, I'll walk along with thee, and shew thee the house, that thou may not *mistake* that, however."

It appears from the original prologue to *THE WILD GALLANT*, that it was first acted on the 5th of February.

Villiers, Countess of Castlemaine, afterwards Duchess of Cleaveland, to whom he address'd a copy of verses on her encouraging his *first* play, which he acknowledges was very ill received, and would have been driven from the scene, if this admired beauty had not by her favour and applause given "new life to his condemn'd and dying muse." It was, however, he tells us, well received at court, and was more than once the divertisement of his Majesty by his own command.

If we consider our author as a dramattick writer, his life may be commodiously divided into four periods. 1. from his outset as a playwright to the temporary suspension of dramattick exhibitions in 1665.—2. from their revival to the time when the

* In a **SESSION OF THE POETS**, written about the year 1670, this poem is treated with as little respect as the play to which it relates :

- " Sir Robert Howard, call'd for over and over,
- " At length sent in Teague with a packet of news,
- " Wherein the sad knight, to his grief, did discover
- " How Dryden had lately robb'd him of his Muse.
- " Each man in the court was pleas'd with the theft,
- " Which made the whole family swear and rant,
- " Desiring, their 'obin in the lurch being left,
- " The thief might be punished for his **WILD GAL-**
LANT.

- " Dryden, who one would have thought had more wit,
- " The censure of every man did disdain,
- " Pleading some pitiful rhymes he had writ
- " In praise of the Countess of Castlemaine."

King's Theatre was destroyed by fire in 1671-2.—3. from that era to 1682, when he discontinued writing for the stage.—4. from 1690 to 1694, in which period his last five plays were produced.

In settling the dates and succession of his plays, Dr. Johnson was led into many errors by following Langbaine, who in his "Account of the English Dramatick Poets," adopted a very absurd method, that of arranging them alphabetically; and frequently annexed to the several pieces the date of a late, instead of the earliest, edition. Dr. Johnson does not seem to have known that Dryden himself had published a list of his plays arranged in the order in which he wrote them.¹ With the aid of this list, and the assistance furnished by the entries in the Stationers' Registers, it will not be difficult to allot almost all his dramas to the years in which they were first performed.

It was a bold attempt, he observes, "to begin with a comedy, which is the most difficult part of dramatick poetry."—Finding himself unsuccessful

¹ Prefixed to KING ARTHUR, 4to. 1691, is the following Advertisement:

"Finding that several of my friends in buying my plays, &c. bound together, have been imposed on by the booksellers foisting in a play which is not mine, [THE MISTAKEN HUSBAND,] I have here, to prevent this for the future, set down a catalogue of my plays and poems in quarto, *putting the plays in the order I wrote them.*

JOHN DRYDEN."

The list subjoined will be found in a more perfect state, in a following page.

in that attempt, his next performance was a tragic-comedy, *THE RIVAL LADIES*, which probably was exhibited in the winter of 1663, being entered on the Stationers' Books, June 5, 1664; and it not being customary at that time to commit plays to the press till they had run their course on the stage.

Our author's connexion with Sir Robert Howard led him to assist that gentleman in writing *THE INDIAN QUEEN*, of which how much was written by Dryden cannot be now ascertained; but the versification of this piece is so much superiour to that of Sir Robert's other plays, that he probably in this instance derived no inconsiderable aid from his coadjutor. The books which it was necessary to consult on that occasion naturally suggested to Dryden the subject of his next tragedy, *THE INDIAN EMPEROR*, which, though the play was not printed before October 1667, probably had been acted early in the winter of 1664-5; for the *INDIAN QUEEN* must have been performed in the middle of the year 1664 or before; and two lines of the Prologue to *THE INDIAN EMPEROR* shew that one year only intervened between the first exhibition of these plays:

"The scenes are old, the habits are the same

"We wore *last year*, before the Spaniards came."

A couplet in the Epilogue also—

"As for the coſſet-wits, he ſays not much,

"Their proper business is, *to damn the Dutch*"—

* He means,—before the Spaniards arrived in *South America*.

furnishes us with a further confirmation, of that date; for in December 1664, letters of reprisal against the Dutch were issued out, and soon afterwards above an hundred Dutch prizes were taken by the English fleet; and war was proclaimed against that nation on the 2d of March following. Accordingly, I find this tragedy entered for publication at Stationers' Hall, May 26, 1665, though, owing to the subsequent national calamities, it was not then printed.

In consequence of the plague breaking out soon afterwards, and of the fatal conflagration which laid a great part of London in ruins in the following year, no dramattick entertainments were allowed to be exhibited from May 1665, to Christmas 1666.¹ During these eighteen months, Dryden, who in this interval, I believe, married Lady Elizabeth Howard, appears to have resided principally in the country, probably at Charlton in Wiltshire, the seat of his father-in-law, the Earl of Berkshire. Here he amused himself with writing his elegant *ESSAY OF DRAMATICK POESY*, which he afterwards dedicated to Charles, Lord Buckhurst, and published in the latter end of the year 1667.²

Though the Art of Criticism at this period had

¹ ROSC. ANG. 8vo. 1708. p. 26.

² It was entered in the Stationers' Books by H. Herringman, Aug. 7, 1667, and published in quarto, probably between that time and Christmas, though the titlepage, according to the custom of booksellers, is dated 1668.

not been so diligently cultivated in England, as it has been in the present century, some essays had been made to ascertain and teach its principles, and a few strictures on English versification had appeared. Gascoigne, before 1575, had given "Certain Notes of Instruction concerning the making of Verse or Rime in English." About the year 1580, Sir Philip Sydney displayed great ingenuity and good sense in his excellent *DEFENCE OF POESY*, against which so furious an attack had been made by the Puritans, that, as he tells us, "from the highest estimation of learning it had fallen to be the laughing-stock of children:" a work in which, amidst many judicious observations on the various kinds of poetical composition, he has introduced the principal precepts of Aristotle on the subject of the drama. Webbe a few years afterwards (1586) published "a Discourse of English Poetry, together with the Author's judgment touching the reformation of our English Verse;" and Puttenham, in 1589, had more largely and methodically treated of the same subject in his *ART OF ENGLISH POESY*. A small tract, containing some Observations on this Art, by Thomas Campion, in 1602, the object of which was to recommend the absurd practice of making English verse "halt ill on Roman feet," (which a few years before had found some warm advocates,) drew from Daniel, the poet, in the following year, his elegant *DEFENCE OF RHYME*. The fourth part of Edmund Bolton's *HYPERCRITICA* professes to treat of

the merits and defects of our principal English writers in prose and verse, or, as the author quaintly expresses himself, to mark out "the prime gardens for gathering English, according to the true gage or standard of the tongue about fifteen or sixteen years ago:" but from this piece, which contains several just observations delivered in a hard and affected style, the poetical student could derive no instruction; for though written in or about the year 1616, it was not published till above a century afterwards.¹ The next work of this nature that appeared in England, was, I think, Ben Jonson's *DISCOVERIES*, which was written about the year 1630, though not published till after the author's death; and displays more good sense than all the other writings of that author.—Still, however, no regular treatise had clearly and methodically delivered the elements of criticism, or established those great principles on which a true judgment concerning the various works addressed to the imagination, might be formed; nor had scenick exhibitions engaged much of the attention of any of the writers who have been mentioned, except Sydney and Jonson: whilst in France, Hedelin and Corneille had furnished their countrymen with express disquisitions on the principal laws of the drama. Our author's *ESSAY OF DRAMATICK POESY* therefore, beside its other merits, had also in some

¹ It was first published by Antony Hall, at the end of the *Continuation of TRIVETI ANNALES*, 8vo. 1722.

measure the attraction of novelty. The colloquial form which he adopted, has been always acknowledged to be attended with some inconvenience ; which, however, he has so happily overcome, that none of his critical works have been more generally read and admired than this Essay, for it passed through three editions in his life-time, and has since his death been frequently reprinted. Nor has its success been disproportioned to its value ; for perhaps our language does not furnish us with any discursive treatise more nearly resembling the excellent models which the ancients have left us, in this difficult species of composition : the introduction, particularly, need not shun a comparison with the best proems of Plato's or Cicero's dialogues.

In this piece, written, as the author has modestly said, " when he was but in the rudiments of his poetry, without name or reputation in the world, having rather the ambition of a writer than the skill," his great object was, " to vindicate the honour of the English Poets from the censures of those who unjustly preferred the French before them : " an object which he has completely attained. Nor should it be forgotten, that he was the first who, in this dialogue, had the hardihood to displace Jonson from the eminence to which by the unanimous voice of Dryden's contemporaries he had most unjustly been elevated, and to set Shakspeare far above him, in that admirable character, which, as his last great biographer has truly

observed, "may stand as a perpetual model of encomiastick criticism; - - - a character so extensive in its comprehension and so curious in its limitations, that nothing can be added, diminished, or reformed; nor can the editors or admirers of Shakspeare, in all their emulation of reverence, boast of much more than of having diffused and paraphrased this epitome of excellence, of having changed Dryden's gold for baser metal, of lower value, though of greater bulk."

The Colloquists in this Dialogue being all real persons, though concealed under feigned names, as Dryden has hinted in the introduction, we are prompted by that curiosity which delights in the investigation and discovery of literary secrets, to try whether by some circumstance or other the persons whom he had here in contemplation, may not be ascertained. "It was," says our author, "the fortune of EUGENIUS, CRITES, LISIDEIUS, and NEANDER, to be in company together; *three* of them persons whom their wit and quality have made known to all the town, and whom I have chose to hide under these borrowed names, that they may not suffer by so ill a relation as I am going to make of their discourse."—EUGENIUS, Prior has informed us,⁶ was meant to represent Charles, Lord Buckhurst, better known afterwards by the title of the Earl of Dorset. CRITES was

⁶ Dedication of his Poems to Lionel, Earl of Dorset, 8vo. 1709.

indisputably Sir Robert Howard ;⁷ as is proved not only by his having recently before this Dialogue was written, published a *critical* preface concerning one of the subjects here discussed, (then a novelty,) but by the very arguments which he had advanced against rhyme, being put, almost in the same words, into the mouth of the personage intended to represent him. By NEANDER it is equally clear our author himself is shadowed ;⁸ a name which his modesty led him to assume, and which he may have borrowed either from a romance of the former age, or from a publication of his own time.⁹ The other speaker is much more difficult

⁷ I once thought that Lord Roscommon was shadowed under this name ; but I soon saw and have acknowledged my error. See vol. i. p. 117.

⁸ In the Notes on the ESSAY ON DRAMATICK POEY, vol. i. pp. 34, 118, I have remarked, that NEANDER represented our author ; and in confirmation of my theory both with respect to him and the other interlocutors, it may be observed, that when the Dialogue is concluded, he and CRITES, being somewhat of a more grave deportment, retire to their respective lodgings ; while EUGENIUS and LISIDEIUS, suitably to their gay characters, go " to some pleasurable appointment they had made."

Since that Essay was printed, I have found that the celebrated Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas, in an Elegy on Dryden's death, and in a poem addressed to Captain Gibbons on the same subject, calls him NEANDER. See also LUCTUS BRITANNICI, fol. 1700. p. 18.

⁹ In 1594 was entered in the Stationers' Register, and probably published about the same time, " NEANDER,

to be ascertained, and for a long time eluded all my conjectures; there being no name, either ancient or modern, that has the most remote affinity to that of LISIDEIUS, nor does etymology in this instance afford us the slightest assistance. At length, however, it occurred to me, that Sir Charles Sidley, (for so his name was then written,) being a very intimate friend of Lord Buckhurst's, and, like that nobleman, much celebrated for his wit and

the Maiden Knight, &c.;" and on the 8th of August, 1658, was entered, "The History of Tobacco, by Egidius Everart, of Antwerp, and John NEANDER, of Breaine." It was published in 8vo. in 1659.

¹ *Sidley* is the true name of this family, and such was the orthography which they used for many generations. The grant of the title of Baronet, in June, 1611, was to Sir William Sidley, Knight; and so Sir Charles subscribed his name to the dedication of his first play, *THE MULBERRY GARDEN*, printed in the same year with this Essay, 1668. At a later period of life he seems to have been called *Sedley*. His daughter Catharine, however, when she was created Countess of Dorchester, in 1685, was named *Sidley*.

² See Wood's account of their very indecent conduct at a *cook's house* in Bow-street, Covent-Garden, in 1663. *Lives of Leland, Hearne, and Wood*, vol. ii. p. 187.—Sir Charles Sidley's portrait is in the Dorset Collection at Knowle.

³ Lord Mulgrave, in his *ESSAY ON SATIRE*, 1682, represents Sir Charles Sidley as a voluptuary; but he is acknowledged both by that writer, and other of his contemporaries, to have been extremely witty, and particularly happy in his similes. He condescended, however,

poetry, was probably the person meant : and such on examination will be found to be the case, for

sometimes to become a *practical joker*, as appears from some anecdotes concerning him, recorded by Oldys, in his manuscript Notes on Langbaine.

Sidley, though somewhat inclining to corpulency, was a handsome man, and very like Kynaston, the Actor, who was so proud of the resemblance, that he got a suit of laced cloaths made exactly after one that Sir Charles had worn ; and appeared in it in publick. In order to punish his vanity, Sidley hired a bravo, who, accosting Kynaston in St. James's Park in his fine suit, pretended to mistake him for the Baronet, and having picked a quarrel with him under pretence of having received a rude message from him, he caned the actor soundly. In vain Kynaston protested he was not the person the bravo took him for : the more he protested, the more blows the other laid on, to punish him for endeavouring to escape chastisement by *so impudent a falsehood*. When some of the poor actor's friends afterwards remonstrated with Sidley on this harsh treatment of an inoffensive man, he replied, that their pity was very much misplaced, and ought rather to be bestowed on him, since Kynaston could not have suffered half so much in his bones, as he (Sidley) had suffered in his reputation ; all the town believing that it was *he* who was thus publicly disgraced.

In those days, when a gentleman drank a lady's health as a toast, by way of doing her still more honour, he frequently threw some part of his dress into the flames ; in which proof of his veneration his companions were obliged to follow him, by consuming the same article, whatever it might be. One of Sidley's friends, after dinner, at a tavern, perceiving he had a very rich lace-cravat on, when he named the lady to whom honour was

Lisideius is only the anagram of SIDLEIUS, or as Dryden seems to have written it, SIDLEYIUS.— Considering the *y* as an *i*,⁴ the name thus latinized

to be done, made a sacrifice of his cravat, and Sir Charles and the rest of the company were all obliged to follow his example. Sir Charles bore his loss with great composure, observing, that it was a good joke, but that he would have as good a frolick some other time. On a subsequent day, the same party being assembled, when Sidley had drunk a bumper to the health of some beauty of the day, he called the waiter, and ordering a toothdrawer into the room, whom he had previously stationed for the purpose, made him draw a decayed tooth which long had plagued him. The rules of good fellowship clearly required that every one of the company should lose a tooth also ; but they hoped he would not be so unmerciful as rigidly to enforce the law. All their remonstrances, however, proving vain, each of his companions successively, *muka gemens*, was obliged to put himself into the hands of the operator, and while they were writhing with pain, Sir Charles continued exclaiming—"Patience, gentlemen, patience ; you know, you promised I should have my frolick too."

This anecdote Oldys appears to have heard from an old gentleman of the name of Partridge, who was Sidley's contemporary. These adventures probably happened when he was extremely young ; and, after all allowances for the thoughtlessness and gaiety of that period of life, have hardly wit enough in them to compensate for the ill-nature.

⁴ In the last age these two letters seem to have been often used indiscriminately, and the same word is sometimes spelt with one of them, and sometimes with the other. Dryden's own name furnishes a proof of the truth of this observation.

becomes *Lisideius*; or if that change was not intended, we should read *LYSIDÆIUS*, in which way, I believe, the word ought to be printed.'—The character and elevated situation of these persons correspond with the description given of three of the speakers in this Dialogue; for they were not less distinguished for their literary accomplishments⁶ than their rank. Sir Charles Sidley, a few

⁵ We have in our author's *MAIDEN QUEEN*—*Lysimantes*, a modern fictitious name also.—So the ancient names of *Lysimachus*, *Lysippas*, *Lysias*, &c.

⁶ "The three most eminent wits of that time," (says Burnet, speaking of the year 1668,) "on whom all the lively libels were fastened, were the Earls of Dorset and Rochester, and Sir Charles Sidley. Lord Dorset was a generous good-natured man. He was so oppressed with phlegm, that till he was a little heated with wine, he scarce ever spoke; but he was upon that exaltation a very lively man. Never was so much ill-nature in a pen, as in his, joined with so much good-nature as was in himself, even to excess; for he was against all punishing, even to malefactors. He was bountiful even to run himself into difficulties; for he commonly gave all he had about him, when he met an object that moved him. But he was so lazy, that though the King courted him to be a favourite, he would not give himself the trouble that belonged to that post. He hated the court and despised the King, when he saw that he was neither generous nor tender-hearted. . . . Sidley had a more sudden and copious wit, which furnished a perpetual run of discourse; but he was not so correct as Lord Dorset, nor so sparkling as Lord Rochester." *Hist. of his own Time*, vol. i. p. 368, 8vo. 1758.

years before, (1664,) had joined with Lord Buckhurst and others in translating Pompey from the French of Corneille, and probably they both had also published about this time some original pieces; and Sir Robert Howard had in the following year collected into a folio volume four of his plays, one of which (*THE COMMITTEE*) had been acted with great success.

During that retirement in the country which afforded sufficient leisure for the composition of the *ESSAY OF DRAMATICK POESY*, and gave rise to our author's *ANNUS MIRABILIS*, a poem in quatrains, which was published early in 1667, he doubtless made some preparation for the theatrical campaign, whenever circumstances should permit it to commence. One of his earliest patrons seem to have been Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery, whom

Prior, in "Heads of an Essay on Learning," MSS. comparing his patron with some other celebrated men of his own time, observes, that "Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, was too much inclined to burlesque; Sir Fleetwood Shephard ran too much into romance and improbability, and the late [Richard] Earl of Ranelagh, into quibble and banter; yet each of these had a great deal of wit; and if they had had more study than generally a court life allows, as their ideas would have been more numerous, their wit would have been more perfect. The late Earl of Dorset was indeed a great exception to this rule; for he had thoughts which no book could lend him, and a way of expressing them which no man ever knew how to prescribe."

he has highly complimented in the Verses addressed to Dr. Charleton in 1663, and in the Dedication of *THE RIVAL LADIES*, in the following year; a dedication which he says—he was emboldened to make, though he had not the honour of being personally known to his Lordship, in consequence of the kindness that he had always shewn to his writings, one of which, by his order, had been transmitted to him in Ireland. That nobleman appears to have been one of the first, who, in imitation of the French, introduced continued rhyme into English tragedies; for which Charles the Second, who took a considerable interest in the business of the theatre, in consequence of his long residence in France was also a strenuous advocate. In compliance with the prevailing mode, *THE INDIAN QUEEN*, and *THE INDIAN EMPEROR*, were written in rhyme. Between that period, however, and the publication of his *ESSAY*, Dryden tells us, he “lay’d aside that practice till he had more leisure, because he found it troublesome and slow.” “But I am no way (he adds,) altered from my opinion of it, at least with any reasons that have opposed it.” In this interval of leisure, therefore, throwing aside the shackles which he had imposed upon himself, he probably wrote *SECRET LOVE*, or *THE MAIDEN QUEEN*,¹ a comedy which was acted, it should seem, on the opening of the theatres by

¹ *THE MAIDEN QUEEN*, and *THE WILD GALLANT*, were entered in the Stationers’ Books, Aug. 7, 1667; the

the King's Servants, in Drury-Lane; and revised his early unsuccessful performance, *THE WILD GALLANT*, which, on its revival, derived some support from the growing fame of the author. This, and all his other dramattick pieces, in which he alone was concerned, except three,^a were acted by the King's Company of Comedians, with whom he probably was induced to engage in consequence of their being successively under the direction and superintendence of Thomas, Henry, and Charles Killigrew, to the various branches of which family he appears to have been strongly attached.

Of *THE MAIDEN QUEEN* the King himself was the great patron, having, it should seem, "suggested the plot, and rescued the piece from the

former, therefore, was probably acted early in the preceding winter, when also *THE WILD GALLANT* seems to have been revived.

^a The six plays acted by the Duke of York's Servants were, *THE TEMPEST*, *SIR MARTIN MARALL*, *LIMBERHAM*, *OEDIPUS*, *TROILUS AND CRESSIDA*, and *THE SPANISH FRIAR*. But two of these plays being written in conjunction with other poets, he probably thought they had as good a right as himself to determine to which theatre they should be given; and *SIR MARTIN MARALL*, being originally the Duke of Newcastle's play, that nobleman had a right to dictate at which of the two playhouses it should be represented. About the time that *LIMBERHAM*, *OEDIPUS*, and *TROILUS AND CRESSIDA* were produced, our author's contract with the King's Company seems to have ceased; and when *THE SPANISH FRIAR* was exhibited, it was certainly at an end.

severity of its enemies." At this period too he was highly indebted to the young Duchess of Monmouth, who had so warmly patronized his INDIAN EMPEROR, that one of his adversaries tells us,

"She the whole court brought over to his side,

"And favour flow'd upon him like a tide:"⁹

and notwithstanding his subsequent opposition to the Duke, her husband, she seems to have continued her kindness to him to a late period of his life.¹

Not long after the recommencement of dramatick exhibitions in London, our author took a more secure method of obtaining emolument from his dramas, than the patronage of any individual, however elevated by rank or fortune, could afford; that of contracting with the King's Theatre for an annual stipend, on condition of furnishing a certain number of plays in each year. The emolument was agreed to be one share and a quarter, out of twelve shares and three quarters of a share, into which the theatrical stock was divided; which is stated by the players to have produced to him, *communibus annis*, between three and four hundred pounds a year. With respect to the number of plays stipulated to be written, there is a great variation of statement in this as in almost all traditional tales; nor would it have been easy to find out the truth, were it not for an authentick

⁹ MEDAL OF JOHN BAYES.

¹ See vol. ii. p. 214.

document by which it is ascertained. Dr. Johnson, misled probably by the *Key to THE REHEARSAL*, published a few years after Dryden's death, has said, that he contracted to produce four plays a year: Cibber, on the other hand, says, two:² but the true number which he agreed to write, was—three;³ as appears from a memorial yet extant, presented probably to the Lord Cham-

² APOLOGY, p. 161.

³ Our author seems to allude to this stipulation in the following lines of his Prologue to *THE MOCK ASTROLOGER*, which appears to have been represented in 1668:

“ As for the poet of the present night,
 “ Though now he claims in you a husband's right, }
 “ He will not hinder you of fresh delight.
 “ He, like a seaman, seldom will appear,
 “ And means to trouble you but *thrice a year* :
 “ That only time from your gallants he'll borrow ;
 “ Be kind to him to-day, and cuckold him to-morrow.”

The gallants here alluded to were his brother poets, *the writing Monsieurs* of the time, as he calls them in a former part of this prologue.

Gildon, inaccurately states, (*LAWS OF POETRY*, 8vo. 1721, p. 38.) that “ after the Restoration, when the two houses struggled for the favour of the town, the taking poets were secured to either house by a sort of retaining fee, which seldom or never amounted to more than *forty shillings* a week, nor was that of any long continuance.” That sum would not have produced more than *sixty pounds* a year, the theatrical season being usually about thirty weeks.

Etherege, Lord Orrery, Otway, Shadwell, Ravens-

berlain about the year 1678.⁴ The reasoning upon this contract has not been less vague than the account of the stipulations which it contained; for it

croft, Crowne, Settle, Behn, and Tate, were all attached to the Duke's House; some of them gratuitously, and some probably by contract. The Poets of the King's Theatre were, Dryden, Sir Robert Howard, Wycherley, James Howard, Lacy, D'Urfey, and Duffet.—Lee, from 1675 to 1678, received a pension from the King's Servants; from that time to 1682, he attached himself to their opponents. Edward Howard, Sir Charles Sidley, and Bankes, gave their plays sometimes to one theatre, and sometimes to the other.

⁴ The original of the following paper remained long in the hands of the Killigrew family, and is now in the possession of Isaac Reed, Esq. of Staple Inn, by whom it was obligingly communicated to me several years ago, to illustrate the History of the Stage. The superscription is lost: but it was probably addressed to the Lord Chamberlain, Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington, in the year 1678.

"WHEREAS upon Mr. Dryden's binding himself to write *three plays* a yeere, he the said Mr. Dryden was admitted and continued as a Sharer in the King's Playhouse for diverse years, and received for his share and a quarter, three or four hundred pounds, *communibus annis*;

* In an indenture tripartite, dated 31 Dec. 1666, between Thomas Killigrew and Henry Killigrew, his son and heir, of the first part, Thomas Porter, Esq. of the second part, and Sir John Sayer and Dame Catharine his wife, of the third part, it is recited (*inter alia*) "that the profits arising by acting of plays, masques, &c. then performed by the company of actors called the King and Queen's players, were, by agreement amongst themselves and Thomas Killigrew, divided into twelve shares and three quarters of a share,—and that Thomas Killi-

has been said, and repeated from book to book, that it is not to be wondered at that our author's

but though he received the moneys, we received not the playes, not one in a yeare. After which, the House being burnt, the Company in building another contracted great debts, so that the Shares fell much short of what they were formerly. Thereupon Mr. Dryden complaining to the Company of his want of profit, the Company was so kind to him, that they not only did not presse him for the playes which he so engaged to write for them, and for which he was paid beforehand, but they did also, at his earnest request, give him a third day for his last new play, called *ALL FOR LOVE*; and at the receipt of the money of the said third day, he acknowledged it as a guift, and a particular kindnesse of the Company. Yet notwithstanding this kind proceeding, Mr. Dryden has now, jointly with Mr. Lee, (who was in pension with us to the last day of our playing, and shall continue,) writt a play called *OEDIPUS*, and given it to the Duke's Company, contrary to his said agreement, his promise, and all gratitude, to the great prejudice and almost undoing of the Company, they being the only poets remaining to us. Mr. Crowne, being under the like agreement with the Duke's House, writt a play called *THE DESTRUCTION*

grew was to have two full shares and three quarters. And by agreement between Henry and Thomas, Henry was to have £.4 per week out of the two shares of Thomas, except such weeks when the players did not act."

From the emoluments which Dryden is here said to have received by his share and a quarter, the total profits of the King's Theatre, antecedent to its being burnt down, should seem to have been about £.4,000 per annum. So that Wright, who asserts in his *HISTORIA HISTRIONICA*, 8vo. 1693, p. 11, that every whole sharer in Killigrew's company, for many years received *a thousand pounds a year*, was undoubtedly mistaken.

dramatick pieces should frequently have been incorrect, when he was under the necessity of writing for bread, and producing *three or four plays* a year.

"It is certain," says Dr. Johnson, following Jacob, that in one year (1678) he published *ALL FOR LOVE*, *ASSIGNATION*, two parts of *THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA*, *SIR MARTIN MARALL*, and *THE STATE OF INNOCENCE*, six complete plays; with a celerity of execution, which, though all Langbaine's charges of plagiarism should be allowed, shews such facility of composition, such readiness of language, and such copiousness of sentiment, as, since the time of Lopez de Vega, perhaps no other author has possessed."—But this statement is

OF JERUSALEM, and being forced by their refusall of it to bring it to us, the said Company compelled us after the studying of it, and a vast expence in scenes and cloathes, to buy off their clayme, by paying all the pension he had received from them; amounting to one hundred and twelve pounds paid by the King's Company, besides neere forty pounds he the said Mr. Crowne paid out of his owne pocket.

"These things considered, if, notwithstanding Mr. Dryden's said agreement, promise, and moneys freely given him for his said last new play, and the many titles we have to his writings, this play be judged away from us, we must submit.

(Signed)

" CHARLES KILLIGREW.

" CHARLES HART.

" RICH. BURT.

" CARDELL GOODMAN.

" MIC. MOHUN."

wholly unfounded; for not one of these plays was produced or originally printed in 1678, except *ALL FOR LOVE*; and the truth is, that whatever may have been Dryden's facility of composition, (which unquestionably was extraordinary,) he does not appear to have produced more plays within a limited time than many other dramatick writers; nor, whatever allowances may be made for the imperfection of his plays, has he any right to our indulgence on the plea of having frequently (if ever) produced three plays in a year.—The contract was probably entered into in the latter end of the year 1667. In the month of January, 1671-2, the theatre which had been built in Drury-Lane but a few years before, was burnt down, and the King's Company were compelled to remove to the playhouse in Lincoln's Inn Fields,¹ which had not long before been deserted by their antagonists, the

¹ It has been doubted where the King's Servants played during the time their theatre in Drury-Lane was rebuilding; but it is ascertained by a manuscript copy of our author's Prologue, which is printed in his *Miscellanies* with only the title of—"Prologue spoken the first day of the King's House acting after the fire." The manuscript ascertains not only the theatre to which they removed, but the play before which this prologue was spoken. See MSS. Birch. 4455, art. 6. (in the British Museum,) "A Prologue of a Play entitled *WIT WITHOUT MONEY*, spoken at the Duke's *Old Theatre* in Lincoln's Inn Fields, (after the King's was burnt,) by the King's players, Feb. 26, 1671." [1671-2]. In the third couplet Dryden

Duke of York's Servants, who had gone to their new house in Dorset Gardens. The King's Servants continued to play in Lincoln's Inn Fields till a new theatre was constructed for them by Sir Christopher Wren, on the old site in Drury-Lane ; which was opened on the 26th of March, 1674, with a prologue and epilogue by our author,* and continued standing till a few years ago. Between 1667 and March 1674, that is, in about seven years, Dryden produced but ten plays, or about three plays in every *two* years. If we extend the account to a later period, December, 1682,

alludes to their antagonists having recently quitted the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields :

" From that hard climate we must wait for bread,

" Whence even the natives, forced by hunger, fled."

From the following lines, it should seem that some of the Nobility, on this emergency, had furnished the Company with cloaths, &c.

* The Epilogue spoken on this occasion exhibits a curious picture of a part of London at that time, through which it was necessary to pass in going to Dorset Gardens :

" Our house relieves the ladies from the frights

" Of ill-paved streets and long dark winter nights ;

" The Flanders horses from a *cold bleak road*,

" Where bears in furs dare scarcely look abroad :

" The audience from worn plays, and fustian stuff

" Of rhyme, more nauseous than three boys in buff."

The now populous Strand and Fleet-street formed the cold bleak road here described. The *three boys in buff* appeared probably in THE THREE BOLD BEAUCHAMPS, an old play which used to be acted at the Red-Bull Theatre.

when for a certain time he discontinued writing for the stage, we shall find, that in sixteen years eighteen dramas only were produced, (allowing **THE STATE OF INNOCENCE**, though never acted, to be one,) which is little more than a play in each year. The era of his greatest exertion seems to have been from 1667 to 1670; in which period probably he wrote five or six plays.— From this statement then, it is clear, that though our author was indisputably distinguished for facility of composition, other dramattick poets have equalled, if not surpassed, him in this particular. There is good ground for believing that Shakspeare for several years composed two plays in each year; and Fletcher, in the last ten years of his life, appears to have furnished the scene with more than thirty dramas, in some of which, however, he was assisted by Massinger, Rowley, and other playwrights.

On the death of Sir William D'Avenant, April 7, 1668, the bays which he had worn from 1638, devolved, though not immediately, (as has commonly been supposed,) on our author. When the office of Royal **POET LAUREATE**, which Dryden enjoyed for near twenty years, was first instituted, it is not now easy to ascertain. Degrees in grammar, which included rhetorick and versification, having, as my late learned and ingenious friend, Mr. Warton, has remarked,¹ been anciently conferred in our Universities, that circumstance has been the occa-

¹ HIST. OF ENG. POETRY, vol. ii. p. 129.

sion of much confusion on this subject; and has led some writers too hastily to suppose persons to have been invested with this office, who, in truth, had no kind of claim to it. A wreath of laurel being presented to the new graduate on taking his degree, he was afterwards frequently styled *poeta laureatus*; and this scholastick laureation⁸ certainly gave rise to the appellation by which the Court Poet was distinguished. The King's Poet Laureate therefore, strictly speaking, (as the same elegant writer has observed,) is only "a graduated rhetorician employed in the service of the King."

So early as the middle of the twelfth century, Henry de Avranches, a Frenchman, (Henricus Abrincensis,) was entertained by our King Henry the Third, as a poet attached to his court; and under the title of "Master Henry, the Versifier," received from that monarch an annual stipend, which seems to have been ten pounds a year; for on one occasion we find that sum paid to him as King's Poet, and on another the sum of one hundred shillings, as the arrears of his salary.⁹ In the

⁸ The form of laureation by the Chancellor of the University of Strasburgh in 1621, was as follows: "I create you, being placed in a chair of state, crowned with laurel and ivy, and wearing a ring of gold, and the same do pronounce and constitute, POET LAUREATE, in the name of the Holy Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen." *Ubi supr.* p. 134. n.

⁹ Liberat. 35 Hen. III. m. 6. Mag. Rot. 35. in rot. compotor. m. 1. a. See Madox's Hist. of the Exchequer, pp. 268, 674.

36th year of the same King's reign, (1252,) forty shillings a year and a pipe of wine were given to Richard, the King's harper;¹ which perhaps gave rise at a subsequent period to a similar bounty to the officer now under our consideration. Gulielmus Peregrinus, who composed a poem on the crusade of Richard the First, appears to have been the royal poet of that time;² and Robert Baston, whom Bale calls *poeta Oxonii laureatus*, and whom Edward the Second is said to have carried with him to the siege of Striveling Castle, to record his Scottish exploits in verse, may be considered as exercising the same office under that monarch.³ Of these versifiers, as they were then called, the composi-

¹ HIST. OF ENG. POET. i. 48.

² Bale. Cent. iii. 45. Tanner's Bibl. p. 591. Pits. p. 266.—He sung Richard's achievements in the Holy Land, in an heroick Latin Poem, entitled ODOEPORICON REGIS.

³ Baston's poem, in monkish Latin hexameters, DE STRIVELINENSI OBSIDIONE, is extant in Forduni SCOTICHON. l. 12. c. xxiii. Being taken by the Scotch in 1314, he was compelled by Robert Brus to purchase his ransom by writing a panegyrick on him. "Jussu Roberti Brusii, tormentis compulsus erat, ut contrarium scriberet, quasi Scoti de Anglis triumphassent." Pits. p. 319.—But finding (says A. Wood, HIST. ET ANTIQ. UNIVER. OXON. p. 101,) that he performed his task very reluctantly, *et quasi invitâ Minervâ*, they dismissed him.—See also Bale. Cent. iii. 369, and MSS. Harl. 1819.—85. Several of this poet's works are preserved in the Cotton Library. According to Bale and Pits, he composed a volume of tragedies and comedies in English.

tions produced in their character of Poets Laureate, were in Latin. Chaucer, perhaps, in the time of Edward the Third and Richard the Second, as a poet, and as receiving a royal pension,⁴ not without a due allowance of sack,⁵ and in the time of Henry the Fourth, Henry Scogan, Master of Arts, (who, if we may credit Ben Jonson,⁶ "made disguises for the King's sons, and wrote in fine tinkling rhyme and flowand verse, with now and then some sense,) with sufficient propriety may be enrolled in the same tuneful and honourable band; yet neither these poets, nor Gower, though two of them are enumerated in Dryden's patent, as having worn the laurel, were ever regularly and expressly appointed to this office: nor does the title of POET LAUREATE occur earlier than the time of Edward the Fourth, to whom John Kay, about the year 1470, dedicating a prose translation of a Latin history of

⁴ Pat. 41 and 48 Ed. III.—1 and 17 Ric. II.—It must be acknowledged, however, that it does not appear that any of the royal grants to Chaucer was made on account of his poetical merits. Skelton, describing Chaucer and Lydgate very particularly, mentions that they wanted nothing but the laurel. I have therefore said above,—*perhaps*.

⁵ Pat. 48 Ed. III. 22 Ric. II.

⁶ "Masque of the Fortunate Isles," Jonson's Works, fol. vol. ii. p. 135. The same writer adds, that "he was paid for't; regarded and rewarded." Bale and Tanner have confounded this Henry Scogan with *John* Scogan, a Jester in the court of King Edward the Fourth, about the year 1480. The compositions which they have ascribed to *John*, are known to have been written by Henry Scogan.

the Siege of Rhodes, styles himself *hys humble Poete Laureate*.¹ None of his poetry, however, either in Latin or English, is known to be extant. Andrew Bernard, a Frenchman and an Augustine monk, who was blind, (as appears from a muniment in the Chief Remembrancer's office, from which I have given an extract in a former work,)² was successively Poet Laureate and Historiographer to Henry the Seventh and Henry the Eighth;³ and

¹ Selden's *TITLES OF HONOUR*, p. 466. edit. 1726. Kay's translation was formerly extant entire in the Cotton Library, Vitel. D. xii. and some fragments of it still remain; but so damaged by the fire which consumed part of that library in 1731, as to be illegible.

² Shakspeare's *PLAYS AND POEMS*, vol. i. p. ii. p. 33.

³ Henry the Seventh, in the second year of his reign, (21 Nov. 1485) by bill under his sign manual, directed to the Bishop of Exeter, Keeper of his Privy Seal, granted to Andrew Bernard a pension of ten marks a year until he should be otherwise provided for. See Rymer's *Manuscript Collections in the Museum*, (in Ayscough's *Catalogue*, 4617).—"Breve Hen. vii. A° 2. N° 12. Per Regem.—Reverende in Christo pater, nobis quamplurimum dilecte, Salutem. Vobis mandamus quod sub privato sigillo nostro in custodia vestra existente literas nostras cancellario nostro Angliæ dirigendas fieri faciatis, mandantes eidem quod sub magno sigillo nostro in custodia sua existente literas nostras patentes fieri faciat, in forma sequenti. Omnibus ad quos, &c. salutem. Sciatis quod nos, consideratione *virtutis, scientiæ, incrementique, quod non nullis per doctrinam Bernardi Andreæ, POETÆ LAUREATI, tam in Universitate nostra Oxoniensi quam in aliis locis non paucis multipliciter profuerit*, de gratia nostra speciali con-

was living in 1522. In 1489, John Skelton was laureated as a rhetorician at Oxford, and a few years afterwards was permitted to wear the laurel publicly at Cambridge, previously to which he had been honoured by Henry the Seventh with a grant to wear either some peculiar dress, or some additional ornament on his ordinary apparel. That he was Poet Laureate to Henry the Eighth, may be presumed from the titles of some of his works, 'I have not, however, met with any proof of his

cessimus et per presentes concedimus eidem Bernardo quandam annuitatem decem marcarum per annum," &c. Seven days afterwards, as appears from an instrument in the Pells-Office, a precept was directed by the same King to the Treasurer and Chamberlains of the Exchequer, to pay him the arrears of his salary from the preceding Easter. Rymer. FORD. vol. xii. p. 317.—In this instrument it is expressly said, that a patent in favour of Bernard had passed under the Great Seal; but no such patent is now extant in the Chapel of the Rolls.

POETÆ LAUREATI may, however, as Mr. Warton has observed, here mean, either the *laureated poet*, as above illustrated, or POET LAUREATE.

Some of Andrew Bernard's compositions, which seem to have been written in his character of Poet Laureate, are yet extant. They are in Latin. "A New Year's Gift" for 1515, is preserved in the archives of New College, Oxford (287): and the presentation copy of his "Verses wishing prosperity to Henry the Eighth's thirteenth year," is in the Museum. MSS. Reg. 12 A. 10. Neither Bale, nor Pitts, nor Tanner, has mentioned Bernard.

' Some of Skelton's Latin poems, as Mr. Warton has remarked, seem to be written in the character of Royal

ever having received an annual salary from that prince, which is a criterion by which we may be enabled to form a conjecture at least concerning the possession of the office; for none of the persons who may be considered as filling this station before our author, except Andrew Bernard, are expressly denominated Poets Laureate, in any grant that I have seen. Because Thomas Churchyard, a voluminous poetaster in the time of Queen Elizabeth, in consequence of having addressed many of the noblemen of her court for near forty years, in such rhymes as he could spin, is called by one of his contemporaries—the *old Court Poet*, he has been described by a modern fanciful writer, without a shadow of reason or probability, as peculiarly countenanced and patronized by that Queen; by whom he is represented as formally placed at the head of the poetical band of that time: but undoubtedly Elizabeth had no Poet Laureate, till in Feb. 1590-1, she conferred on Spencer a pension of fifty pounds a year,* the grant of which was discovered some years ago in the Chapel of the Rolls; from which time to his death in 1598-9, he may

Poet Laureate; particularly that entitled—"Hæc laureatus Skeltonus, reginæ orator. Chorus, &c. de triumphali victoria, &c. It is subscribed—"Per Skeltonida laureatum, oratorem regium." Erasmus, in a Letter to Henry the Eighth, speaking of this poet, thus writes: "Skeltonum; Brytannicarum literarum lumen ac decus, qui tua studia possit non solum accendere, sed etiam consummare, hunc domi habes," &c. Bale. Cent. viii. p. 651.

* Pat. 38 Eliz. p. 3.

properly be considered as filling this office, though, like most of his predecessors, and his two immediate successors, he is not expressly styled *Laureate* in his patent. Samuel Daniel has been represented by Antony Wood¹ and others, as the next successor to the laurel; but he never was thus honoured; for from the death of Spencer to the year 1616, the poetical throne was vacant, though in that period Daniel, Jonson, Dekker, and others, furnished the court with pageants and masques, and may during that interval be considered as *volunteer Laureates*. About four months before the death of Shakspeare, January 1, 1615-16, King James granted to Ben Jonson a pension of one hundred marks a year, (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) during his life, "in consideration of the good and acceptable services heretofore done, and hereafter to be done, by him the said Benjamin Jonson;"² a grant which invested him with all the dignity and functions of

¹ ATH. OXON. i. 447.—With equal impropriety Michael Drayton, early in the reign of Charles the First, is styled *Poet Laureate*. See the Commendatory Verses Prefixed to HOLLANDI POSTHUMA. Cantab. 4to. 1626, the first of which has this title: "Michael Drayton, Esq. and *Poet Laureate*, in commendation of the author," &c. This designation seems to have been given to him by Holland, *honoris causa*. He was not, however, even a *laureated poet*; for no such degree was then conferred by the English Universities. Robert Whittington, the grammarian, was the last person who was honoured with a rhetorical degree at Oxford, in 1319.

² Pat. 13 Jac. p. 29, n. 12.

Poet Laureate. This consideration, however, it must be acknowledged, is common to many other crown grants not conferred on poets; nor did any patent that I have seen expressly mention the duty and peculiar services expected from a Poet Laureate, before that of Charles the First to the same person, in which the character and functions of this office are for the first time specifically pointed out. On the 23d of April, 1630, that King, by letters patent reciting the former grant, which had been surrendered,—“in consideration (says the patent) of the good and acceptable service done to us and our said father by the said Benjamin Jonson, and especially to encourage him to proceed in those services of his wit and pen which we have enjoined unto him, and which we expect from him,” was pleased to augment his annuity of one hundred marks to one hundred pounds *per annum*, during life, payable from the preceding Christmas.¹ Old Ben had not long before been struck with the palsy, on which account perhaps, as well as to gratify his well-known propensity, his Majesty by the same instrument granted him a tierce of Canary Wine yearly, during his life, out of the royal cellars at Whitehall; of which there is no mention in the former grant. It has been generally supposed that Sir William D'Avenant succeeded to the bays immediately on Jonson's death in August, 1637; but he then received no favour from the

¹ Pat. 6 Car. p. 11, n. 37.

Crown: About sixteen months afterwards, Dec. 13, 1638, Letters Patent passed the Great Seal, granting, "in consideration of service heretofore done, and hereafter to be done, by William D'Avenant, gentleman," an annuity of one hundred pounds a year to the said W. D. *during his Majesty's pleasure.*⁶ By this patent no canary wine was given, nor is any mention made of the office of Poet Laureate, or the duties belonging to it.

All the biographers of Dryden have said, that on the death of D'Avenant, in 1668, he was appointed Poet Laureate. But it appears from his Letters Patent, a copy of which will be found in the Appendix, that he did not obtain the laurel till August 18th, 1670. With respect, however, to the emoluments of this office, and that of Historiographer Royal, (which had become vacant by the death of James Howell in 1666, and was also granted to him,)⁷ the patent had a retrospect, and the salary, which was £.200 a year during pleasure, to be paid quarterly, commenced and was made payable from the Midsummer after D'Avenant's death; with the privilege also of receiving every year one butt of canary wine from his Majesty's own cellars at Whitehall: and, to give our author all due honour, the grant is recited to be

⁶ Pat. 14 Cat. p. 9. n. 33.

⁷ All Dryden's biographers have erroneously represented him as not possessing this office till the accession of James the Second.

made to "John Dryden, Master of Arts, in consideration of his many acceptable services theretofore done to his Majesty, and from an observation of his learning and eminent abilities, and his great skill and elegant style both in verse and prose."¹

It was many years ago suggested by Dr. Birch, that Dryden was probably indebted for this promotion to Sheffield, then Earl of Mulgrave, whom he supposed to have been at that time Lord Chamberlain; and Dr. Johnson, misled perhaps by this authority, in his Life of Sheffield, speaking of that nobleman's application to study in his youth, has said, that "he must have been early considered uncommonly skilful in poetry, if it be true as has been reported, that when he was not yet twenty years old, his recommendation advanced Dryden to the laurel." But the ground on which Birch's conjecture was built, fails; for Sheffield was not Lord Chamberlain till fifteen years after his appointment, having succeeded Lord Aylesbury in that office, October 23d, 1685. The Lord Chamberlain, at the time of Dryden's obtaining the laurel, was Edward, Earl of Manchester, who died at Whitehall about eight months afterwards, May 5, 1671. Whether that nobleman paid as much attention to the Muses as to sublunary ladies, (for he married no less than five wives,) or whether our author had any means of conciliating his friendship, I have not been able to ascertain, and

¹ Pat. 22 Car. II. p. 6, n. 6.

have been less anxious to inquire, because I doubt whether the office of Poet Laureate was then absolutely in his gift, being conferred at that time, not by the mere appointment of the Lord Chamberlain, but by patent. But however that may have been, the interference of either the Prime Minister, or the Crown, must have been sufficiently powerful to have obtained the laurel for our author: and from several passages in his works, it seems to me probable that he was indebted for this promotion to Sir Thomas Clifford, who in November, 1666, had been made Comptroller of the Household and a Privy Counsellor, and in June, 1668, was appointed Treasurer of the Household. He was also one of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury; and in 1672 was raised to the peerage, and made Lord High Treasurer. In the Dedication of *AMBOYNA* to Lord Clifford, in 1673, Dryden acknowledges "the many and great favours conferred upon him by his Lordship, *for many years*, which might more properly (he adds) be called one continued act of generosity and goodness." With equal warmth he speaks of this patron in his address to Sir Charles Sidley in the same year: "For my own part, I, who am the least among the poets, have yet the fortune to be honoured with the *best patron*, and the best friend; for (to omit some great persons of our court to whom I am many ways obliged, and have taken care of me during the exigencies of a war,) I have found a better *Mæcenas* in the person of my Lord

mind, in some time afterwards they appear to have been reconciled ; and they continued, it should seem, to live in friendship with each other to the close of their lives.* As a peace-offering, the offensive preface to *THE INDIAN EMPEROR* was cancelled, with such care, that I have never met with an ancient copy of that play, in which it was found.

Between the re-opening of the theatres in the beginning of the year 1667 and the middle of the year 1670, Dryden produced five original plays, and two in which he was aided by others ; *THE MAIDEN QUEEN*, *THE TEMPEST*, *SIR MARTIN MARALL*, *THE MOCK ASTROLOGER*, *TYRANNICK LOVE*, OR *THE ROYAL MARTYR*, and the two parts of *THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA* : and this appears to have been the period of his greatest dramattick exertion, if we confine our consideration to the number, without estimating the value, of his pieces. *THE MAIDEN QUEEN*, which had probably been written in the country, while theatrical entertainments were discontinued, was entered in the Stationers' Register, Aug. 6, 1667 ; and therefore, without doubt, had been exhibited in the preceding winter. *THE TEMPEST*, though not entered in the same Register till January 6, 1669-70, at which time it was printed, we know

* See a Letter to Jacob Tonson, in the Appendix, written by our author about the year 1696.

from the epilogue, was acted in 1667.¹ **SIR MARTIN MARALL** was originally a mere translation from the French, made by William, Duke of Newcastle, and by him presented to our author, who revised and adapted it to the stage; but it was entered at Stationers' Hall, June 24, 1668, as the Duke's play, without any mention of Dryden, either from respect to that nobleman, (on which account, perhaps, it was published anonymously,) or lest, were it delivered to the publick as the Laureate's performance, the giving it away from the King's Servants, with whom he was in a kind of partnership, might be considered as a breach of his contract. None of our author's pieces appear to have been more successful than this. It was acted above thirty times at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and four times at Court, between the time of its first exhibition and the removal of the Duke's Company from that house; and on the 9th of November, 1671, they opened their new theatre in Dorset Gardens with the same comedy, which, though it had been already so often performed,—by the popularity of Nokes, who acted Marall, drew full audiences three nights successively.

THE MOCK ASTROLOGER was registered in the Stationers' Books, Nov. 20, 1668, and, I believe,

¹ Not adverting to this circumstance, I have suggested in a note on vol. i. p. 331, that this play was not acted till after D'Avenant's death in 1668; but I was certainly mistaken.

soon afterwards printed, though I have never seen an edition of that year. Of **TYRANNICK LOVE**, which was written in seven weeks, the entry in the same books was made on the 14th of July, 1669 : it therefore made part of the theatrical entertainment of the preceding winter : and in the autumn of that year and the spring of the next, probably, were produced the two parts of **THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA**, which are mentioned in the preface to that play, though they were not registered at Stationers' Hall till February 20, 1670-71, nor published till 1672. The publication perhaps was retarded by the criticisms to which the Epilogue to the Second Part gave rise, which were answered in the **DEFENCE** subjoined to it. In this Essay Dryden contends that an unjust preference was given to the dramatists of the former age, whose defects he here enumerates ; and, with Horace, expresses his indignation, that the wit of the moderns should be depreciated, not on account of its coarseness or insipidity, but because it wanted the rust of antiquity ;—

non quia crassè

Compositum illepidè putetur, sed quia nuper.

He was now become sufficiently eminent to be an object of envy, and to give a degree of celebrity to any attempt to lessen his literary reputation. The great success which had attended his heroick plays, doubtless excited the jealousy of the rival candidates for fame. In this class, however, we

cannot place Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, who was so far from exercising his pen in any performance of that kind, that he thought the loud applause which had been bestowed for some years on the rhyming tragedies produced by D'Avenant, Dryden, Stapylton, Howard, Killigrew, and others, much misplaced, and resolved to correct the public taste by holding them up to ridicule. With this view, in conjunction, it is said, with Martin Clifford, Master of the Charter-House, Butler, Sprat, and others,^a he wrote the celebrated farce entitled *THE REHEARSAL*. Some of the contemporary writers have stated, that it took up as much time as the *Siege of Troy*;^b and with justice ex-

^a Buckingham's poem in answer to *ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL*, a piece utterly devoid of merit of any kind, furnishes us with a strong confirmation of the received opinion that he was aided by others in writing *THE REHEARSAL*.

Of one of his coadjutors, Martin Clifford, whom his contemporaries usually called *Mat Clifford*, little is known. Wood mentions in his manuscript additions to his own copy of the *ATHENÆ OXONIENSIS*, that he was a Lieutenant in Thomas Earl of Ossory's regiment in 1660; for which he quotes *MERC. PUB.* p. 510. He was elected from Westminster to Trinity College, Cambridge, ten years before our author went there; was made Master of the Charter-House Nov. 17, 1671; and died Dec. 10, 1677.

^b See *THE STATE POEMS*, vol. ii. p. 216: "*On the Duke of Bucks*."

" I come to his farce, which must needs be well done,
 " For Troy was not longer before it was won,
 " Since 'tis more than ten years since this farce was begun:

press their surprise, that such a combination of wits, and a period of ten years, should have been requisite for a work, which apparently a less numerous band could have produced without such mighty

- " With the help of pimps, plays, and table-chat,
- " And th' advice of his own canonical Sprat,
- " And his family scribe, antichristian Mat ;
- " With transcribing of these, and translating those,
- " With transmuting of rhyme, and transversing prose,
- " He hath dress'd up his farce with other men's cloaths.
- " His abusing the living, and robbing the dead,
- " His inserting fine things which other men said,
- " Makes this new way of writing without tail or head.
- " But where the devil his own wit doth lie,
- " They must have very good eyes that espy,
- " Unless in the dances and mimickry.
- " I confess the dances are very well writ,
- " And the time and the tune by Haines are well set,
- " And Littelton's motion and dress has much wit :
- " But when his poet, John Bayes, did appear,
- " 'Twas known to more than half that were there,
- " That the great'st part was his Grace's charactèr.
- " For he many years plagu'd his friends for their crimes,
- " Repeating his verses in other men's rhymes,
- " To the very same person ten thousand times.
- " But his Grace has tormented the players more
- " Than the Howards, or Flecknoes, or all the store
- " Of damned dull rogues that e'er plagu'd them before.
- " When in France, and in Spain, and in Holland, 'tis known,
- " What wonders our mighty statesman has done ;—
- " 'Twill make them all tremble to hear his renown.

throws. In the Key to this piece, published by a bookseller in 1704,⁴ we are told, that it was written, and ready for representation, before the middle of the year 1665, and that Sir Robert Howard, under the name of *Bilboa*, was then intended to have been the hero of the farce. That some interlude of this kind might have been thus early intended, is not improbable; but assuredly the original hero was not Howard, but D'Avenant; not only on account of the name of *Bilboa*, which alludes to his mili-

" For he that can libel the poets, and knows
 " How to mimick the players in gestures and cloaths,
 " With ease may destroy all his Majesty's foes."

Our author, to whom these lines are ascribed in the STATE POEMS, without any authority I believe, in the Dedication of the Satires of Juvenal to Lord Dorset, has said something like what we find here in the seventh stanza. See vol. iii. p. 82.

⁴ The Key to THE REHEARSAL was published by Samuel Briscoe, a bookseller, who lived opposite to Will's Coffee-House in Russel-street, Covent-Garden, and appears to have been connected with several of the poets of his time.—In the Preface to the Second volume of " Familiar Letters of Love and Gallantry," published by him not long after our author's death, he says, that " after he had finished his collection, he had received several original letters and poems of Mr. Dryden;"—but they never appeared.

Mr. Spence says, in his ANECDOTES, from the information of Dr. Lockier, that Tonson had a good Key to THE REHEARSAL, " but refused to print it, because he had been so much obliged to Dryden."

tary character, (for he was Lieutenant-General of the Ordnance under the Duke of Newcastle, in the Civil Wars,) but from the circumstance of the patch that in the course of the drama he is obliged to wear on his nose ;' which can relate to none but D'Avenant. Besides, he was a much more distinguished character, not only as Poet Laureate, but as superintendant of the Duke of York's Company of Comedians, and the introducer of heroick plays on the English stage. The allusions to Sir Robert Howard's tragedies are so few and inconsiderable, that he never could have been the author's principal object.—As soon as it was resolved that Dryden should be the hero, an abundant use was made of his INDIAN EMPEROR and CONQUEST OF GRANADA ; yet the author was unwilling to lose any of the strokes which were pe-

' D'Avenant had met with the misfortune here alluded to, before the breaking out of the Civil Wars, as appears from " A [fictitious] Letter sent by Sir John Suckling, from France, deploring his sad estate and plight," 4to. 1641 :

" The witty poet, let all know it,

" D'Avenant by name-a,

" In this design that I call mine,

" I utterly disclaim-a.

" Though he can write, he cannot fight,

" And bravely take a fort-a,

" Nor can he smell a project well,

" *His nose it is too short-a.*"

culiarly levelled at D'Avenant, and thus the piece became a kind of patchwork.

This lively farce was first performed on the 7th of December, 1671,⁶ and was published in the following year :⁷ a publication which, we are told by Prior, " the Duke of Buckingham deferred for some time, till he was sure, as he expressed it, that my Lord Dorset would not *rehearse* on him again." Such was the high opinion then entertained of that nobleman's satirical powers. It was formerly a common notion that *THE REHEARSAL* was hissed off the stage the first night of its performance, though it afterwards met with a favourable reception :⁸ but this is a mistake. Though the poignancy of its satire is certainly somewhat abated by the lapse of more than a century, at the time of its original representation it must have afforded a high degree of entertainment. Much of the success, doubtless, was owing to the mimicry employed. Dryden's dress, and manner, and usual expressions, were all minutely copied, and the Duke of Buckingham took incredible pains in teaching Lacy, the original performer of Bayes,⁹ to speak some passages of that part :¹ in

⁶ *ATH. OXON.* vol. ii. col. 804.

⁷ It was entered in the Stationers' Register, by Thomas Dring, June 19, 1672.

⁸ Spence's *ANECDOTES*.

⁹ After the death of Lacy in 1681, the part of Bayes was played by Haines, who was famous for dancing and mimicry.

these he probably imitated our author's mode of recitation, which was by no means excellent.

Dr. Johnson has observed that *THE REHEARSAL*, though played in 1671, "is represented as ridiculing passages in *THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA* and *ASSIGNATION*, which were not published till 1678; in *MARRIAGE A-LA-MODE*, published in 1673; and in *TYRANNICK LOVE*, of 1670."—"These contradictions (he adds) shew how readily satire is applied."—But in truth, there is no contradiction whatsoever; for these seeming difficulties all arise from his having confided in Langbaine's erroneous-account of the dates of our author's plays, and his not knowing that various alterations and *additions* were made to *THE REHEARSAL*, after its original publication.

The plays of Dryden, parodied or otherwise ridiculed in this farce, as it now appears, are *THE WILD GALLANT*, *THE MAIDEN QUEEN*, *TYRANNICK LOVE*, the two parts of *GRANADA*, and *THE ASSIGNATION*.^a The first of these, we have seen, was printed in 1669; *THE MAIDEN QUEEN*, in the preceding year; *TYRANNICK LOVE* in 1670. The two parts of *GRANADA* were performed in

^a Spence, from the information of Dr. Lockier, who was personally acquainted with Dryden.

^a The author of the *Key to THE REHEARSAL*, mentions also *MARRIAGE A-LA-MODE*, which was not printed till 1673; but there is not a single parody on any passage in that play, nor any allusion to it.

1669 and 1670, though not printed till 1672.*
They might therefore be ridiculed on the stage in

* See p. 8. n. If a story which has been often repeated, were true, it might afford us some aid in ascertaining the precise time when the First Part of *GRANADA* was originally played. It has been said that Nell Gwyn first attracted the notice of her royal lover in speaking the Epilogue to that play, under the pent-house of a hat as large as a cart-wheel. As her son, the Duke of St. Albans, was born on the 8th of May, 1670, this circumstance would prove that the play was performed in the preceding year. But unluckily the very same tale has been told concerning *TYRANNICK LOVE*; and we are informed, that in speaking the Epilogue to that piece she won the King's heart:

"Hold! are you mad, you damn'd confounded rogue?

"I am to rise and speak the Epilogue."

This suits sufficiently well with the birth of her son; for *TYRANNICK LOVE* was certainly performed in 1669.—A third tale, however, says, that it was her agility in dancing with which Charles was first captivated.

Dryden, who is supposed to have been very partial to Nelly, as she was usually called till she became *Madam Gwyn*, allotting to her the principal part in some of his comedies, told Mr. Boyer, (as he has mentioned in a note on his translation of Grammont's *MEMOIRS*, 8vo, 1714,) that "she was Lord Dorset's mistress, before the King fell in love with her; and that having a mind to get her from his Lordship, he sent him on a sleeveless errand to France." If the account given by Collins in his *PEERAGE* were correct,—that Lord Dorset was sent to France in 1669,—this anecdote also would confirm the date of *GRANADA*, supposing that to have been the play in which this celebrated actress attracted the royal favour. But the embassy to France was in return for the visit of

a piece exhibited in December 1671, from memory, or from copies furnished by some of the actors; and as *THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA* was published in 1672, and *THE REHEARSAL* at a late period in that year, the author had an opportunity of making his parodies correct from the printed copy of the play intended to be exposed. As for the comedy last mentioned in the list of pieces ridiculed, the original edition of *THE REHEARSAL* contains no allusion to *THE ASSIGNATION*; the only passage that has a reference to that comedy⁴ being added in an edition posterior to its publication.

The song in the third act, which Bayes tells us "was made by Tom Thimble's first wife after she was dead," to the tune of *Farewel, fair Armida*, &c. is known to have been a parody on one written by our author on the death of Captain Digby, (a younger son of George, Earl of Bristol,) who was

the Duchess of Orleans to Charles, who met her at Dover in May 1670; and therefore Lord Dorset's mission must have been posterior to that time. However, Nell Gwyn, who, after she became the King's mistress, remained for some time on the stage, was probably not unkind to some of her former lovers, among whom are enumerated Hart and Lacy, the players, as well as Lord Dorset; and the King finding that nobleman perhaps too much in his way, after the birth of her son, (who in January, 1683-4, was created Duke of St. Albans,) might perhaps have sent him on a sleeveless errand in June, 1670.

⁴ "Indeed, Mr. Bayes, that hip-hop," &c. and Bayes's Answer, *REHEARSAL*, Act III. sc. 5.—These words are *not in the original edition of 1672.*

killed in the sea-fight between the English and Dutch Fleet off Southwold Bay, on the 28th of May, 1672. Here is a seeming difficulty, which, however, is at once removed by examining the original edition ; where Bayes only says—"What, are they [the players] gone, without singing my last new song?" The song itself, with the prefatory matter, was introduced in a subsequent copy. The original lines on which Buckingham's parody is formed, not having been preserved in Dryden's works, and being found entire only in a scarce miscellany,¹ I shall here insert them. Such is the force of the association of ideas, that it is difficult to peruse this song without finding some of that ridicule which has been attached to it ; yet I know not that, if it had not been parodied, the conceits in it would appear more objectionable than those which are found in many other similar compositions of the last century, and were certainly very generally admired. The lines must be supposed to be written immediately before the lover's departure, and, in the style of ancient ballads, would have been called—"Digby's *last Goodnight*." The lady to whom they are addressed, is said to have been the beautiful Frances Stuart, wife of Charles Stuart, Duke of Richmond, of whom she was deprived in the following December.

¹ COVENT-GARDEN DROLLERY, 8vo. 1672, p. 16.—The "fair Armida" was married to the Duke of Richmond in 1667, and died October 15, 1702.

- " Farewell, fair Armida, my joy and my grief,
 " In vain I have lov'd you, and hope no relief;
 " Undone by your virtue, too strict and severe,
 " Your eyes gave me love, and you gave me despair:
 " Now call'd by my honour, I seek with content
 " The fate which in pity you would not prevent:
 " To languish in love, were to find by delay
 " A death that's more welcome the speediest way.
 " On seas and in battles, in bullets and fire,
 " The danger is less than in hopeless desire;
 " My death's wound you give, though far off I bear
 " My fall from your sight,—not to cost you a tear:
 " But if the kind flood on a wave should convey
 " And under your window my body should lay,
 " The wound on my breast when you happen to see,
 " You'll say with a sigh—*it was given by me.*"

In conversing with the late Mr. Boswell on the merit of *THE REHEARSAL*, Dr. Johnson observed, with his usual pointed energy, that "it had not salt enough to keep itself sweet;—it had not vitality enough to preserve it from putrefaction." Dryden, however, (as I learn from the testimony of one who was personally acquainted with him,) allowed that "it had a great many good things in it, though so severe (he added) against myself; but I can't help saying, that Smith and Johnson are two of the coolest and most insignificant fellows I ever met with on the stage."—He made no reply, for which he has assigned the following

⁶ Spence, from the information of Dr. Lockier, of whom some account will be given hereafter.

reasons in the Dedication of Juvenal : " I answered not **THE REHEARSAL**, because I knew the author sat to himself when he drew the picture, and was the very Bayes of his own farce : because also I knew that my betters were more concerned than I was in that satire : and lastly, because Mr. Smith and Mr. Johnson, the main pillars of it, were two such languishing gentlemen in their conversation, that I could liken them to nothing but to their own relations, those noble characters of men of wit and pleasure about the town."

Whatever might have been the success of **THE REHEARSAL**, it did not for some years banish rhyme from the stage ; several heroick plays having been acted between 1672 and 1677. Gildon, indeed, asserts in one place, that by the force of its satire, with the aid of Lord Mulgrave's **ESSAY ON POETRY**, in less than a year's time scarce any piece of this kind was endured :¹ but the **ESSAY ON POETRY** did not appear till ten years afterwards, and therefore could not have had any operation at the time here spoken of ; and in another place the same writer expresses his surprise that **THE REHEARSAL** should be acted to full houses, for three or four days together, and immediately afterwards " those very plays, or others full of all the absurdities exploded in that pleasant criticism, not less thronged."² Without doubt, heroick plays kept

¹ **LAWS OF POETRY**, p. 55, 8vo. 1721.

² **COMPLETE ART OF POETRY**, vol. i. p. 203, 12mo. 1718.

their ground for some time. Gildon, who was but six years old when this farce first appeared, could tell nothing of its effect from his own knowledge. At a subsequent period, on the revival of many of the pieces condemned by *THE REHEARSAL*, to which his testimony principally applies, he says in one of his *Essays*, that they were received with applause; but in another, he adds, that their success arose from their extravagance, for he had always observed, they had the effect of comedy on the audience.* This observation, however, which was made in 1698, seems to refer more particularly to an exhibition in that year, when one of the players, to retaliate on our author for a prologue with which he was offended, in performing *Almanzor*, probably endeavoured to excite laughter by making the part ridiculous.

Dryden, however, yielded so far to the popular tide, which now seemed to set against heroick plays, as to turn his thoughts from the buskin to the sock, and in 1672 produced two comedies, *MARRIAGE A-LA-MODE*, and *THE ASSIGNATION, OR LOVE IN A NUNNERY*. *MARRIAGE A-LA-MODE* appears to have been acted in May,¹ and

* Continuation of Langbaine's Account of the English Dramatick Poets, p. 43.

¹ The following lines of the Prologue to *MARRIAGE A-LA-MODE*, I believe, allude to the equipment of the fleet, which afterwards engaged the Dutch off Southwold Bay, May 28th, 1672:

THE ASSIGNATION in the following winter.¹ They were both entered at Stationers' Hall, March 18, 1672-3,¹ and printed in 1673. The former of

" Lord, how reform'd and quiet are we grown,
 " Since all our braves and all our wits are gone :
 " Fop-corner now is free from civil war,
 " White-wig and vizard make no longer jar ;
 " *France and the fleet* have swept the town so clear,
 " That we can act in peace, and you can hear."

In the conclusion of the same Prologue, there is an allusion to Ravenscroft's CITIZEN TURN'D GENTLEMAN, which, according to Downes, (ROSC. ANGL. p. 32,) was the second new play brought out by the Duke of York's Servants at their new theatre in Dorset Gardens, and was acted with great success, probably in March or April, 1678. That theatre, on account of its situation, seems to have been much resorted to by citizens.

" Our city friends *so far* will hardly come,
 " They can take up with pleasures *nearer home* ;
 " And see gay shows and gaudy scenes elsewhere,
 " For we presume they seldom come to hear.
 " But they have now ta'en up a glorious trade,
 " And *cutting* Morecraft *struts* in masquerade :
 " There's all our hope, for we shall shew to-day
 " A masquing ball, to recommend our play."

By "*cutting*," or, as we should now say, *dashing*, "*Morecraft strutting in masquerade*," was meant the Citizen turn'd Gentleman, who in the fifth act of that piece is created a Mamamouchi, with a great deal of fantastick Turkish pomp.

¹ Ravenscroft, in his Prologue to THE CARELESS LOVERS, which was performed in Lent, 1678, alludes to

these comedies was performed with success, being enumerated by Downes, the Prompter, among the *taking plays* of the King's Theatre; but *THE ASSIGNATION* by the author's own account was damned.

In the following year (1673) he produced the tragedy of *AMBOYNA*, which he says, was "written in haste, but with an English heart," for the temporary purpose of inflaming the nation against the Dutch, with whom we were then at war. The greater part of this piece, which was entered in the Stationers' Register, June 26, 1673, and published soon afterwards, is written in prose; and what is not prose is blank verse. Though "contrived and written in a month," (as the author tells us,) "the subject barren, the persons low, and the writing

THE ASSIGNATION, and confirms the date assigned to that piece:

- "An author did, to please you, let his wit run,
- "Of late much on a serving-man and cittern,
- "And yet you would not like the serenade,
- "Nay, and you damn'd his nuns in masquerade:
- "You did his Spanish singsong too abhor,
- "*Ay que locura con tanto rigor.*
- "In fine, the whole by you so much was blamed,
- "To act their parts the players were ashamed.
- "Ah, how severe your malice was that day,
- "To damn at once the poet and his play!"

¹ The former of these plays was entered in the Stationers' Books by a different title: *AMOROUS ADVENTURES, OR MARRIAGE A-LA-MODE.*

not heightened with many laboured scenes," it appears to have been acted with success.

After the production of the three preceding plays, which were all performed at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, occupied during these years by the King's Servants, Dryden appears for some time to have suspended his dramattick labours; for *THE STATE OF INNOCENCE*,⁴ which was published in 1674, could not have been intended for a stage-exhibition, though it has entitled it an opera. Mr. Aubrey, who was personally acquainted with Dryden, informs us,⁵ that on this occasion he waited on the blind bard, with whom it may be presumed he was on friendly terms, and previous to entering on his task, asked his permission to put his great poem into rhyme. "Ay, said Milton, you may *tag* my verses, if you will." Dennis, who

⁴ A title somewhat different was originally intended for this piece also; for it was thus registered at Stationers' Hall, April 17, 1674: "*THE FALL OF ANGELS AND OF MAN IN INNOCENCE*, written by John Dryden, Esq." It was not however published, as appears from the Preface, till after the death of Milton, which happened on Sunday the 8th of November, 1674. See the curious depositions concerning his Nuncupative Will, published by Mr. Warton, in one of which a servant-maid who had lived with Milton, deposes, that he died late at night on a Sunday, about a month preceding her giving evidence in that cause; which was Sunday the 15th of November. But Milton was buried on the 11th; she evidently therefore mistook a week in her reckoning.

⁵ Life of Milton, MS.

was an enthusiastick admirer of Milton's poem, mentions a circumstance relative to this piece, worth recording. "Dryden," (he observes,) "in his Preface before *THE STATE OF INNOCENCE*, appears to have been the first, those gentlemen excepted whose verses are before Milton's poem, who discovered in so publick a manner an extraordinary opinion of Milton's extraordinary merit. And yet Mr. Dryden at that time knew not half the extent of his excellence, as more than twenty years afterwards he confessed to me, and is pretty plain from his writing *THE STATE OF INNOCENCE*." Had he known the full extent of Milton's excellence, Dennis thought he would not have ventured on this undertaking, unless he designed to be a foil to him: "but they (he adds) who knew Mr. Dryden, know very well that he was not of a temper to design to be a foil to any one."⁶

So little at this time was Milton's great work known or admired, that Rymer, who promised in 1678 to publish some strictures upon it, (a promise which he never fulfilled,) speaks of it with extreme contempt, as a worthless piece *which some are pleased to call a poem*; nor was it much attended to till about fourteen years after it had been converted into an opera. Our author, however, with equal candour, modesty, and good taste, thus highly extols it: "I cannot, without injury to the deceased author of *PARADISE LOST*, but acknow-

⁶ Dennis's Letters, vol. i. p. 75, 8vo. 1781.

ledge that this poem [THE STATE OF INNOCENCE] has received its entire foundation, part of the design, and many of the ornaments, from him. What I have borrowed will be so easily discerned from my mean productions, that I shall not need to point the reader to the places. And truly I should be sorry for my own sake, that any one should take the pains to compare them together, the original being undoubtedly one of the greatest, most noble, and sublime poems, which either this age or nation has produced."

In consequence of some manuscript copies of this opera having got abroad, it seems to have been attacked before it had yet appeared in print; for he tells us that "Milton had been taxed by some false criticks for choosing a supernatural argument;" and he quotes four of his own lines, which, he says, had been "sufficiently canvassed by his ill-natured censurers:"

"Cherub and Seraph, careless of their charge,
"And wanton in full ease now live at large;
"Unguarded leave the passes of the sky,
"And all dissolved in hallelujahs lie."

The critical pamphlet which contains these remarks, I have never seen.

Before we quit the subject of Milton's poem, an anecdote concerning it, in which our author makes a considerable figure, may not improperly be noticed; though, like many other traditional stories, it will not bear a very rigid examination. The

elder Richardson, speaking of the tardy reputation of PARADISE LOST, tells us, (and the tale has been repeated in various Lives of Milton,) that he was informed by Sir George Hungerford, an ancient member of parliament, (many years previous to 1734,) that Sir John Denham came into the House one morning with a sheet of PARADISE LOST wet from the press, in his hand; and being asked what it was, he replied, "*part of the noblest poem that ever was written in any language or in any age.*" However, the book remained unknown till it was produced about *two years afterwards* by Lord Buckhurst on the following occasion. That nobleman, in company with Mr. Fleetwood Shephard, (who frequently told the story to Dr. Tancred Robinson, an eminent physician, and Mr. Richardson's informer,) looking over some books in Little Britain, met with PARADISE LOST; and being surprised with some passages in turning it over, bought it. The bookseller requested his Lordship to speak in its favour, if he liked it; for *the impression lay on his hands as waste paper.* Lord Buckhurst, (whom Richardson inaccurately calls the Earl of Dorset, for he did not succeed to that title till some years afterwards,) having read the poem, sent it to Dryden, who in a short time returned it with this answer: "*This man cuts us all out, and the ancients too.*"—"Much the same character (adds Mr. Richardson) he gave of it to a north-country gentleman, to whom I mentioned the book, he being a great reader, but not in a right train,

coming to town seldom, and keeping little company. Dryden amazed him with speaking so loftily of it. "Why, Mr. Dryden, says he, (Sir W. L. told me the thing himself,) 'tis not in rhyme." "No; [replied Dryden,] *nor would I have done my Virgil in rhyme, if I was to begin it again.*"¹ This conversation, which is said to have passed between the gentleman here alluded to under the initial letters W. L., and our author, while he was engaged in his translation of Virgil, will be more properly considered in another place: but the former anecdote requires some little observation.

How Sir John Denham should get into his hands one of the sheets of PARADISE LOST, while it was working off at the press, it is not very easy to conceive. The proof-sheets of every book, as well as the finished sheets when worked off, previous to publication are subject to the inspection of no person but the author, or the persons to whom he may confide them; and there is no evidence or probability that any intimacy subsisted between Sir John Denham and Milton. Here then is the first difficulty. The next is, that during a great part of the year 1667, when Milton's poem probably was passing through the press, the Knight was disordered in his understanding: but a stronger objection remains behind; for on examination, it

¹ "Explanatory Notes and Remarks on Milton's PARADISE LOST," &c. 8vo. 1734; p. cxix.

will be found that Denham, who is said to have thus blazoned *PARADISE LOST* in the House of Commons, was never in parliament. Let us, however, waive this objection, and suppose this eulogy to have been pronounced in a full House of Commons in 1667, in which year Milton's great poem according to some of the titlepages first appeared, whilst others have the dates of 1668 and 1669.* So little effect had Denham's commendation, that we find in *two years afterwards* almost the whole impression lying on the bookseller's hands as waste-paper : during which time Dryden, a poet himself, living among poets, and personally acquainted with Milton, had never seen it ! And to crown all, by the original contract between Milton and Simmons, the printer, dated April 27, 1667, it was stipulated, that whenever *thirteen hundred* books were sold, he should receive five pounds, in addition to the sum originally paid on the sale of the copy : and this second sum of five pounds *was paid* to him, as appears from the receipt, on the 26th of April, 1669 : so that in two years after the original publication, we find, that instead of almost the whole impression then lying on the bookseller's hands, thirteen hundred out of fifteen hundred copies of this poem had been dispersed. Unless

* *PARADISE LOST*, a poem by J. M. was entered in the Stationers' Books by Samuel Symons, Aug. 20, 1669. It was sold for three shillings, as appears from a note in the titlepage of my copy.

therefore, almost every species of incongruity and contradiction can authenticate a narrative, this anecdote must be rejected as wholly unworthy of credit.

A month only having been employed on *THE STATE OF INNOCENCE*, our author had full leisure for the composition of *AURENG-ZEBE*, a tragedy, which was exhibited in the spring of 1675, or before, being entered in the Stationers' Register, on the 29th of November in that year, and published probably in the next month, though according to the usual practice of booksellers it bears the date of 1676. In the Prologue to this tragedy, which is written in heroick couplets, he confessed that he was become weary of "his old mistress, rhyme," and accordingly this is the last heroick tragedy which he produced. The reason assigned for this change of opinion is so forceable, with respect to dramattick compositions, that it is surprising he should not have been struck by it at an earlier period :

"Passion's too fierce to be in fetters bound,
"And nature flies him like enchanted ground."

The interest which Charles the Second took in the exhibitions of the stage is well known, and is strongly evinced by a passage in the dedication of this piece to the Earl of Mulgrave, from which we learn that the manuscript was perused by the King, before it received the author's last hand, and that "the most considerable event of it was modelled by his royal pleasure."

In 1676 and 1677, Dryden appears to have been employed in writing the tragedy of *ALL FOR LOVE*, and the comedy of *LIMBERHAM*,⁹ which were both printed in 1678. His friend Sir Charles Sidley had produced, probably in the winter of 1676, a tragedy in rhyme on the subject of *ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA*, with some success; but doubtless it was driven from the stage, as soon as "the only play which our author wrote for himself," made its appearance. "The rest, (he tells us,) were given to the people."

For many years after the Restoration, the reputation of Ben Jonson stood so high, that to deny his superlative merit above all the other dramatick writers of England, was considered as a kind of sacrilege. About this time a better taste began to dawn, and chiefly by Dryden's means the transcendent excellencies of Shakspeare began to be understood, though he was yet but little studied, and few of his plays were acted. As in the Prologue to *AURENG-ZEBE*, Dryden had paid that incomparable poet a high compliment,¹ so in the conclusion of the Preface to *ALL FOR LOVE* he thus extols him :

⁹ *ALL FOR LOVE* was entered at Stationers' Hall by H. Herringman, January 31, 1677-8. Of *LIMBERHAM*, I could find no notice in the Stationers' Register.

¹ "But spite of all his pride, a secret shame

"Invades his breast at Shakspeare's honour'd name:

"Aw'd when he hears his godlike Romans rage,

"He, in a just despair, would quit the stage."

"I hope I need not to explain myself, that I have not copied my author servilely. Words and phrases must of necessity receive a change in succeeding ages : but it is almost a miracle that much of his language remains so pure ; and that he who began dramattick poetry amongst us, untaught by any, and as Ben Jonson tells us, without learning, should by the force of his own genius perform so much, that in a manner he has left no praise for any who come after him. The occasion is fair, and the subject would be pleasant, to handle the difference of styles between him and Fletcher, and wherein and how far they are both to be imitated. But since I must not be over-confident of my own performance after him, it will be prudence in me to be silent. Yet I hope I may affirm, and without vanity, that by imitating him I have excelled myself throughout the play ; and particularly that I prefer the scene betwixt Antony and Ventidius to any thing which I have written in this kind."

Of the comedy of *LIMBERHAM*, which was acted at the Duke's theatre, the fate is well known : it expired, by the author's own confession, on the third night, "for having," as he states, "expressed too much of the vices it decries." Langbaine suggests, that it was condemned for exposing the *keeping* part of the town. I have, I think, somewhere read, that the author, in the character of Limberham, had Lord Shaftesbury particularly in view ; whose partisans were probably highly offended, and joined heartily in its condemnation."

Much of what displeased on the stage, we are told, was either altered or omitted in the print. This comedy is, however, I believe, yet extant in its original state; for some years ago I saw a manuscript copy of it, which had been found by Lord Bolingbroke among the sweepings of Pope's study, in which a pen had been drawn through several exceptionable passages, that do not appear in the printed play.

The contract which had subsisted for many years between Dryden and the King's Company of comedians, appears about this time to have been dissolved, in consequence of some disagreement, now beyond the reach of discovery. Hence we find his three next dramas, as well as that last mentioned, exhibited at the theatre of their opponents, in Dorset Gardens.

Of the tragedy of *ORBIPUS*, which was written in conjunction with Nat. Lee, and acted with great applause ten nights successively,¹ I have not found any notice in the Stationers' Register. This play, of which Dryden formed the general scheme, and contributed the first and third acts,⁴ was published in 1679, as was the alteration of Shakspeare's *TROILUS AND CRESSIDA*, under the title of *TRUTH*

¹ In the Prologue to *ALL FOR LOVE*, acted not long before, we have—

“ In short, a pattern and companion fit

“ For all the keeping *Tonies* of the pit.”

² *ROSC. ANGL.* p. 37.

⁴ *Vindication of THE DUKE OF GUISE*, vol. ii. p. 129.

FOUND TOO LATE. The Essay prefixed to it—
“ On the grounds of Criticism in Tragedy,” ap-
pears to have been an after-thought; for the play
itself was entered at Stationers’ Hall by Jacob
Tonson, now become our author’s bookseller,
April 14, 1679, and on the 18th of the following
June the Critical Essay was separately registered,
having probably been written in the intervening
period.

Our author’s pension having been withheld for
some time, this circumstance, if we are to believe
a lampoon of that day,⁵ gave rise to the tragi-
comedy of **THE SPANISH FRIAR**: but however he
might complain of the tardiness of payment, it is
highly improbable that he should thus express his
resentment at a delay which he must have known
arose solely from the poverty of the Exchequer.
It was acted with great success,⁶ probably in Feb.
1681-2, for the concluding lines of the Prologue
seem to allude to the recent murder of Mr. Thynne
on the 12th of the preceding month.

The two Companies of Players called the King’s
and the Duke’s Servants, who had for above twenty
years continued a contention detrimental to them

⁵ **THE LAUREAT**, folio, 1687.

⁶ “ It was excellently acted, (says Downes,) and pro-
duced a vast profit to the company.” **ROSC. ANG. ubi sup.**
Nokes, the celebrated actor, was much admired in the
part of Gomez, and Antony Leigh in that of the Friar;
in which character Leigh was drawn at full length by
Kneller, for Charles, Earl of Dorset.

both, and, as our author has expressed it, "like monarchs, were nearly ruined by an expensive warfare," in 1682 resolved to cease all further hostilities, and to form themselves into one body. Their coalition took place near the close of this year;¹ and Dryden furnished the New United Company with a Prologue and Epilogue, which were spoken at the opening of the theatre in Drury-Lane, Nov. 16, 1682.* On the 30th of the same month was performed for the first time the tragedy of *THE DUKE OF GUISE*, of which Nat. Lee contributed two-thirds, and Dryden the first scene, the whole fourth act, and the first half, or somewhat more, of the fifth.² He likewise furnished, beside the Prologue and Epilogue, as they now appear, another Epilogue³ intended to have been spoken in the preceding summer, when this play was forbidden to be acted; which has not been preserved in his works.—On the controversy which *THE DUKE OF GUISE* occasioned, it is not necessary to dwell, as an account of it may be found in the notes subjoined to the *VINDICATION* of that piece, which was published about three months afterwards by our author.—The parallel here intended between the leaguers of France and the English and Scottish Covenanters, had been pointed out

¹ Cibber (*APOLOGY*, p. 81.) has inaccurately stated that the two companies united in 1684.

* MS. Luttrell.

² *Vindication of THE DUKE OF GUISE*, vol. ii. p. 75.

³ A half-sheet in Mr. Bindley's Collection.

many years before by Dr. Ryves in his *MERCURIUS RUSTICUS*.

Dryden's attachment to the Duke of York, which induced him to revise and new-model this early production of his muse, was manifested some months before in a Prologue on the Duke's return from Scotland, which was spoken before *VENICE PRESERVED* on the 21st of April, 1682, and another in honour of the Duchess, spoken before the same play on the 31st of the ensuing May. On each of these occasions, Otway furnished an Epilogue. The former of these Epilogues, which is extremely long, and together with the original political Prologue to that tragedy probably occasioned a severe attack on him by Shadwell, has been preserved by Fenton; but of the other I have never seen a copy except the original half-sheet in the collection of Mr. Bindley.

We have now reached the close of that period which may be considered as the third portion of our author's dramattick life. It remains only to take a slight survey of the various contests in which during this period he was engaged with authors and others, the meanest of whom his admirable poetry has rendered immortal.

The Earl of Rochester was, indeed, a poet of a higher class, and wanted not his aid to be remembered. Dr. Johnson expresses some surprise that "Dryden, in the Dedication of *MARRIAGE A-LA-MODE* to this nobleman should have acknowledged him as the defender of his poetry, and the pro-

moter of his fortune, whom yet tradition always represents as his enemy, and who is mentioned by him with some disrespect in the Preface to *Juvenal*." But a little attention to dates will solve this difficulty. Lord Rochester, in 1668, at the early age of one-and-twenty, had the honour to be appointed a Gentleman of the Bed-chamber to Charles the Second, who took great delight in his company. It is highly probable that the advancement of fortune to which Dryden alludes, was, his contributing, with others, to obtain for him the office of Poet Laureate. Being by his place much about the King, he resided chiefly in London, and the theatre engaged much of his attention. His good sense and good taste could not but have had a strong perception of the excellence of Dryden's poetical talents, to which we may be sure he always did justice in his heart, though at one time he was induced by spleen to speak slightly of him. In 1673, *MARRIAGE A-LA-MODE* was dedicated to him; and they were then on such friendly terms as to correspond together, as appears from a letter of Dryden to him, which will be found in a subsequent page. Whether, however, from a jealousy in his nature, which could not endure that the reputation even of those whom he patronized should rise above a certain point, or from caprice, or from whatever other cause, he not only neglected, but ridiculed and endeavoured to depreciate several poets whom he had previously commended and supported. Otway, in the Preface to *DON CARLOS*,

in 1676, says, he " could never enough acknowledge the unspeakable obligations he had received from the Earl of Rochester, who seemed almost to make it his business to establish that play in the good opinion of the King and his Royal Highness [the Duke of York] : " and in the following year, in the Dedication of *TITUS AND BERENICE* to the same nobleman, he owns with gratitude, that he had found him a most generous and bountiful patron. Yet of poor Otway in a year or two afterwards, in a *SESSION OF THE POETS*, Rochester thus writes :

- " Tom Otway came next, Tom Shadwell's dear zany,¹
- " And swears for heroicks he writes best of any ;
- " *DON CARLOS* his pockets so amply had fill'd,
- " That his mange was quite cur'd, and his lice were all kill'd.
- " But Apollo had seen his face on the stage,
- " And prudently did not think fit to engage
- " The scum of a playhouse for the prep of an age." }

In like manner, having raised Crowne into some degree of reputation, in two years afterwards, on his *DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM* meeting with great success, Rochester withdrew his favour from

¹ Otway appeared on the stage in the part of the King in Mrs. Behn's *JEALOUS BRIDEGROOM*, which was performed at the Duke's Theatre in 1678 ; but was so " dash'd," as Downes expresses it, by the fulness of the house, " which put him into a tremendous agony, that he was spoiled for an actor." *ROSC. ANGL.* p. 34.

him, "as if," says the author of a pretended letter under the name of St. Evremont; "he would be still in contradiction to the town." Nor did Shadwell or Settle escape from his satire, though, for particular purposes, he at one period was their protector. But in addition to the general inconstancy or jealousy of his nature, another motive prompted him to endeavour to mortify and depress our author: this was Dryden's attachment to Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave, who had publicly branded Rochester as a coward for refusing to fight him. Dryden's intimacy with Sheffield probably commenced about the end of the year 1673, when he was twenty-five years old; from which time to that of his own death, Rochester was a determined enemy of our author. In return for the Dedication of *MARRIAGE A-LA-MODE* in the spring of that year, he appears to have written a letter of thanks to Dryden, not now extant, which produced the letter from the poet already mentioned: but soon afterwards all friendly correspondence and intercourse must have ceased between them; for in this very year he warmly espoused the interest of Elkanah Settle, introduced him at Court as a rival, if not superiour poet, and wrote a Prologue which was spoken before that author's *EMPRESS OF MOROCCO*, when it was exhibited at Whitehall. To this play, which was published in 1673, is prefixed a Dedication containing some sarcasms on Dryden, or as he expresses it, "a most arrogant, calumniating, ill-natured, and scandalous pre-

face ;" and still more to aggravate the offence, the play was ornamented with sculptures, and sold at an uncommon price. To discourage Settle's petulance, Dryden, in conjunction with Crowne and Shadwell, with whom he was then on amicable terms, in 1674, wrote some *Strictures on THE EMPRESS OF MOROCCO*, to shew how little the author of that tragedy was entitled to the new rank in which Rochester had placed him. That a man who in his proudest days appears to have been desirous of acquiring fame by the contrivance of a puppet-shew,^a and by writing verses for the City Pageants,—who finally was sunk so low as to be employed in making machinery for Bartholomew Fair, and in his old age condescended to act in the *Droll of St. GEORGE* in a dragon of green leather of *his own invention*,—that such a man should ever have been the antagonist and rival of Dryden, is so extraordinary, that were not the fact supported by indisputable evidence, it would scarcely be credited. Nothing however, says Dennis, "is more certain, than that Mr. Settle, who is now [1717] the City Poet, was formerly a poet of the Court. And at what time was he so? Why, in the reign of King Charles the Second, when that Court was more gallant and more polite

^a "In fire-works give him leave to vent his spite,

"These are the only serpents he can write :

"The height of his ambition is, we know,

"But to be *master of a puppet-shew*."

Second Part of *ABSALOM* and *ACHITOPHEL*.

than ever the English Court perhaps had been before : when there was at Court the present and the late Duke of Buckingham, the late Earl of Dorset, Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, famous for his wit and poetry, Sir Charles Sidley, Mr. Saville, Mr. Buckley, and several others.

“ Mr. Settle’s first tragedy, *CAMBYSES, KING OF PERSIA*, was acted for three weeks together. The second, which was *THE EMPRESS OF MOROCCO*, was acted for a month together, and was in such high esteem both with the Court and Town, that it was acted at Whitehall before the King by the gentlemen and ladies of the Court ; and the Prologue, which was spoken by the Lady Betty Howard, was writ by the famous Lord Rochester. The bookseller who printed it, depending upon the prepossession of the town, ventured to distinguish it from all the plays that had been ever published before ; for it was the first play that ever was sold in England for two shillings, and the first that ever was printed with cuts. The booksellers at that time of day had not discovered so much of the weakness of their gentle readers as they have done since, nor so plainly discovered that fools, like children, are to be drawn in by gewgaws.— Well ; but what was the event of this great success ? Mr. Settle began to grow insolent, as any one may see, who reads the Epistle Dedicatory to *THE EMPRESS OF MOROCCO*: Mr. Dryden, Mr. Shadwell, and Mr. Crowne, began to grow jealous ; and they three in confederacy wrote Remarks on

THE EMPRESS OF MOROCCO. Mr. Settle answered them; and, according to the opinion which the town then had of the matter, (for I have utterly forgot the controversy,) had by much the better of them all. In short, Mr. Settle was then a formidable rival to Mr. Dryden; and I remember very well, that not only the town, but the University of Cambridge, was very much divided in their opinions about the preference that ought to be given to them; and in both places the younger fry inclined to Elkanah."

This account, though in general true, like many others which I have had occasion to examine, is not true in all its parts. Dennis, who was born in 1657, went to Caius College in Cambridge some years after **THE EMPRESS OF MOROCCO** was first acted,¹ at which time he was at Harrow school: his relation therefore in some measure must have been grounded upon hearsay. **CAMBYSES**, instead of being played for *three weeks together*, was acted only *six nights successively*:⁴ and therefore some

¹ "Johannes Dennis, Francisci filius, ephippiarii, Londini natus, literisq; gram. institutus per an. — sub magistro Ellys, deinde apud Harrowe sub magistro Horne per quinquennium, admissus 24 Jan. 13, 1675, Pen. Min. in Comm. Scholar. an. natus 18. sub tutela Magistri Ellys." Coll. Caii. Regr.

1679. Joh. Dennis, Coll. Caii. Art. Bac. Ibidem.

⁴ Rosc. ANGL. p. 23. Downes, the author of that book was Prompter to the Duke of York's Company of Comedians, by whom **CAMBYSES** was acted.

allowance must be made for exaggeration with respect to **THE EMPRESS OF MOROCCO**. Dennis's testimony, however, is perfectly unexceptionable with regard to the University of Cambridge, of which he became a member in January, 1675-6; and after all abatements, it appears that in London, partly from the protection of Rochester, and partly by the clamour of the party for whom Settle at a subsequent period wrote, he was for several years preposterously elevated into a competition with Dryden. Rochester, however, soon grew weary of him, and that he might not be too much elated by the recent applause which he had received, in 1675 recommended Crowne to the King to write the Masque of **CALISTO**, which was performed at Court by the Princesses, Mary and Anne, each of whom sat afterwards on the English throne, and five other ladies; aided by several noblemen, and various performers from the King's Theatre, who joined in the songs and dances.'

' The persons of this Masque were represented as follows: Calisto, by the Lady Mary; Nyphe, by Lady Anne; Jupiter, by Lady Henrietta Wentworth (for whom the Duke of Monmouth deserted his wife); Juno, by the Countess of Sussex; Psecps, by Lady Mary Mordaunt; Diana, by Mrs. Blague, late Maid of Honour to the Queen; and Mercury by Mrs. Sarah Jennings, Maid of Honour to the Duchess of York, and afterwards Duchess of Marlborough.

Nymphs attending Diana, and performers in the Dances, the Countess of Derby, the Countess of Pem-

The piece was rehearsed and performed near thirty times ; and according to the author's account, " the dancing, singing, and musick, which were all in the highest perfection, and the graceful action, incomparable beauty and splendid habits of the princesses, whose lustre received no moderate increase from the beauties and rich habits of those ladies who accompanied them, afforded the spectators extraordinary delight."—By the recommendation of Crowne, Rochester's malice was doubly gratified ; for beside mortifying Settle, a marked slight was shewn to Dryden, whose office as Poet Laureate it peculiarly was to compose such entertainments for the Court. His feelings, however, on this occasion did not prevent him from writing an Epilogue, which was intended to have been spoken after the representation of this masque at Court, but which, I suppose by Rochester's interference, was rejected.

Soon afterwards, according to the account given by Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, was written the *ESSAY ON SATIRE*, which is commonly sup-

broke, Lady Catharine Herbert, Mrs. Fitzgerald, and Mrs. Frazer, Maid of Honour to the Queen.

Male Dancers, the Duke of Monmouth, Viscount Dunblaine, Lord Daincourt, Mr. Trevor, Mr. Harpe, Mr. Lane.

Performers from the theatres, who acted in the Prologue and in the Choruses, Mr. Hart, Mr. Turner, Mr. Richardson, Mr. Marsh, jun. Mr. Ford, Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Knight, Mrs. Butler.

posed to have been the joint-production of that nobleman and our author. Dr. Lockier, who has already been mentioned, thought that Dryden had the principal hand in this piece, and that Sheffield only made a few verbal alterations :⁶ but an attentive perusal of it will, I think, lead to an opposite conclusion, the very reverse of this statement being, I believe, the truth. To try the character or merits of this poem truly, it should be read in the form in which it originally appeared, and if it be compared with the first copy of the *ESSAY ON POETRY*, which is indisputably Sheffield's, a great similarity may be observed between them ;— *idem vultus et color* : the same general air, the same looseness of structure, and in many places the same want of precision and harmony, will be found to characterize both poems ; defects which never could have proceeded from the pen of our author at this time. Dryden, to whom without doubt the *ESSAY ON SATIRE* was shewn, might have made a few verbal alterations ; but the distance at which they stood from each other, probably prevented him from objecting to much that he could easily have amended and improved. Though Le Sage had not yet written his entertaining work, and our author had never read the history of the Archbishop of Granada, his sagacity must have taught him not to be too free on this occasion. When the same poem, above thirty years afterwards, fell

⁶ Spence's *ANECDOTES*.

into the hands of Pope, to whose revision it is known Sheffield submitted his verses' preparatory to a new edition, that great poet being happily placed in a state of independence, was less scrupulous; and accordingly we find in Sheffield's two principal poems innumerable alterations. Let us then try the *ESSAY ON SATIRE* by this test. If Dryden's hand were to be clearly traced in any part of this poem, it might be expected almost with certainty to be found in the character of Rochester, who had treated him with so much slight. I do not say that our author might not have ventured to suggest an epithet or a hint, in this as well as in other parts of the *Essay*; but is it credible that when he had attained his utmost excellence of versification, he should have written *several* of the following lines?

- " Rochester *I despise for 's mere want of wit,*
- " *Though thought to have a tail and cloven feet,*
- " *For while he mischief means to all mankind,*
- " *Himself alone the ill effects does find;*
- " *And so, like witches, justly suffers shame,*
- " *Whose harmless malice is so much the same.*
- " *False are his words, affected is his wit,*
- " *So often does he aim, so seldom hit.*
- " *To every face he cringes, while he speaks,*
- " *But when the back is turn'd, the head he breaks.*
- " *Mean in each action, lewd in every limb,*
- " *Manners themselves are mischievous in him;*
- " *A proof that chance alone makes every creature,—*
- " *A very Killigrew, without good-nature.*

- " For what a Bessus has he always lived,
" And his own kickings notably contrived ;
" For (there's the folly that's still mix'd with fear)
" Cowards more blows than any hero bear.
" Of fighting sparks Fame may her pleasure say,
" But 'tis a bolder thing to run away.
" The world may well forgive him all his ill,
" For every fault does prove his penance still.
" *Falsely* he falls into some dangerous noose,
" And then as meanly labours to get loose.
" A life so infamous is better quitting ;
" Spent in base injury and low submitting.—
" I'd like to have left out his poetry,
" Forgot by all almost as well as me.
" Sometimes he has some humour, never wit,
" And if it rarely, very rarely hit,
" 'Tis under such a nasty rubbish laid,
" To find it out's the cinder-woman's trade ;
" Who for the wretched remnants of a fire,
" Must toil all day in ashes and in mire.
" So lewdly dull his idle works appear,
" The wretched text deserve no comments here ;
" Where one poor thought sometime's left all alone,
" For a whole page of dullness to atone :
" 'Mongst forty bad, one tolerable line,
" Without expression, fancy, or design."

Such was this character, as it came originally from the hands of the author. If that author had been Dryden, what reason can be assigned, why he should not have given every part of it the polish which it received from the hands of Pope, by whom it appears to have been thus corrected and amended? The censure of Rochester's poetry, it is observable, is wholly omitted :

" *Last enter Rochester of sprightly wit,*
 " *Yet not for converse safe, or business fit.*
 " Mean in each action, lewd in every limb,
 " Manners themselves are mischievous in him.
 " *A gloss he gives to every foul design,*
 " *And we must own his very vices shine.*
 " *But of this odd ill-nature to mankind,*
 " Himself alone the ill effects will find.
 " *So envious hags in vain their witchcraft try,*
 " *Yet for intended mischief justly die.*
 " Yet what a Bessus has he always lived,
 " And his own kickings notably contrived ;
 " For (there's the folly that's still mix'd with fear,)
 " Cowards more blows than any heroes bear.
 " Of fighting sparks Fame may her pleasure say ;
 " But 'tis a bolder thing to run away.
 " The world may well forgive him all his ill,
 " For every fault does prove his penance still.
 " *Easily he falls into some dangerous noose :*
 " And then as meanly labours to get loose :
 " A life so infamous is better quitting,
 " Spent in base injury and low submitting."

In his own edition of this Essay, Sheffield says, it was written in 1675 ; which, from the circumstances already enumerated, seems sufficiently probable. It does not, however, appear to have got abroad in any form till November, 1679, when several manuscript copies having been handed about, one of them fell into Rochester's hands ; and he thus speaks of it in a letter to his friend, Henry Saville, which is printed in his Works without a date, but from a circumstance mentioned in it must have been written on the 21st of November,

1679 : " I have sent you herewith a libel, in which my own share is not the least. The King having perused it, is no way dissatisfied with his. The author is apparently Mr. Dr[yden], his patron Lord M[ulgrave] having a panegyrick in the midst."

The mean revenge which Rochester took, by hiring some ruffians to cudgel our author on the 18th of the ensuing December,* as he was returning from Will's Coffee-House through Rose-street, Covent-Garden, to his own house, is well known. If there were any doubt of his being concerned in that pusillanimous and disgraceful action, it would be removed by the following passage in another of his letters :

" You write me word that I'm out of favour with a certain poet, whom I have admired for the disproportion of him and his attributes. He is a rarity which I cannot but be fond of, as one would be of a hog that could fiddle, or a singing owl. If

* In a newspaper, entitled " Domestic Intelligence, or News from both City and Country," published on the 26th of December, is an Advertisement, offering a reward of £.50. to any person who should discover the offender by whom this assault was committed ; and on the 2d of January, the same reward (and pardon) is promised to the discoverer, though he should himself have committed the fact, provided he should make known the person who incited him to this unlawful act. But neither the perpetrators of this outrage, nor their employers, were ever discovered.

he falls on me at the blunt, which is his very good weapon in wit, I will forgive him if you please; and *leave the repartee to Black WILL with a cudgel.*"

In this base outrage Rochester has been always supposed to have been joined by Louise de Querouaille,* Duchess of Portsmouth, with whom he appears from his letters to have been extremely intimate, and who must have been greatly exasperated by the following lines, as they stand in the original copy :

- " Nor shall the royal mistresses be named,
- " Too ugly, or too easy, to be blamed :
- " With whom each rhyming fool keeps such a pother,
- " They are as common that way as the other,
- " Yet saunt'ring Charles between his beastly brace,
- " Meets with dissembling still in either place ;
- " Affected humour or a painted face. }
- " In loyal libels we have often told him,
- " How one' has jilted him, the other sold him ;
- " How that affects to laugh, how this to weep ;
- " But who can rail so long as he can sleep ?—

* Louise de Querouaille, (popularly called *Carwell*,) came to England in 1670, in the train of the Duchess of Orleans, sister of Charles II. being sent by Louis XIV. with the view of captivating that monarch, and binding him to the French interest. She soon afterwards became the King's mistress, and completely effectuated the object of her mission. On the 19th of August, 1673, she was created Countess of Farham and Duchess of Portsmouth.

† Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleaveland.

" Was ever prince by two at once misled,
" *False, foolish, old, ill-natured, and ill-bred ?*"

Our author's literary warfare with Settle and Shadwell,

" Who, by his muse, to all succeeding times,
" Shall live, in spite of their own doggrel rhymes,"—

is so interwoven with his political history, that before we investigate the origin of his variance with the poetical son of Flecknoe, to which we are indebted for one of his happiest effusions, it may be proper to give some account of those pieces which he wrote in support of the party then first distinguished by the name of Tories.

After he had issued out his *ANNUS MIRABILIS*, he for many years entirely devoted himself to the stage; for I do not recollect that he gave the publick any production not of a dramattick form, either in poetry or prose, (a few papers of verses excepted,) between the years 1667 and 1680, when he published a translation of the Epistles of Ovid, two of which, (Canace to Macareus, and Dido to Æneas,) were written by him entirely, and one (Helen to Paris,) in conjunction with Lord Mulgrave. In the Dedication of *AURENG-ZEBE* to that nobleman he feelingly laments the drudgery which his contract with the theatre had imposed on him. " If I must be condemned (says he) to rhyme, I find some ease in my change of punishment. I desire to be no longer the Sisyphus of

the stage, to roll up a stone with endless labour, which (to follow the proverb,) gathers no moss, and which is perpetually falling down again. I never thought myself very fit for an employment where many of my predecessors have excelled me in all kinds, and some of my contemporaries,^a even in my own partial judgment, have outdone me in comedy." He then traces out his scheme of writing an epick poem, which (as he elsewhere informs us,) he at this time meditated, either on the subject of King Arthur conquering the Saxons, or that of Edward the Black Prince subduing Spain, and restoring it to Don Pedro, the lawful Prince :^b but this noble design unfortunately he never was sufficiently at ease to be able to execute.

In 1681 he relieved and diversified his dramattick

^a Wycherley and Etherege, were probably the comick poets here in his thoughts.

^b Our author appears to have even sketched the principal outlines of an epick poem on the latter subject, which he seems to have preferred. See vol. iii. p. 108 : — " which for the compass of time, including only the expedition of one year, for the greatness of the action, and its answerable event, for the magnanimity of the English hero opposed to the ingratitude of the person whom he restored, and for the many beautiful episodes *which I had interwoven* with the principal design, together with the characters of the chiefest English persons, (wherein, after Virgil and Spencer, I would have taken occasion to represent my living friends and patrons, of the noblest families, and also shadowed the events of future ages in the succession of our imperial line,)" &c.

toils by engaging in politicks, and produced his celebrated satire, entitled **ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL**, the great object of which was to gain new friends to the King, and to discredit the faction of Lord Shaftesbury, the Duke of Monmouth, and their adherents ; “ a production (says Dr. Johnson,) which, if it be considered as a poem political and controversial, will be found to comprize all the excellencies of which the subject is capable ; acrimony of censure, elegance of praise, artful delineation of characters, variety and vigour of sentiment, happy turn of language, and pleasing harmony of numbers : and all these raised to such a height as can scarcely be found in any other English composition.”

Mr. Harte, who had studied Dryden's works with great attention, we are told, was of opinion that he had finally settled his principles of versification in 1676, when he produced **AURENG-ZEBE** ; “ and according to his own account of the short time in which he wrote **TYRANNICK LOVE** and **THE STATE OF INNOCENCE**, he soon (says Dr. Johnson,) obtained the full effect of diligence, and added facility to correctness.” But this great writer was led into an error concerning those pieces, by former biographers ; for they were both written before **AURENG-ZEBE**, and therefore Dryden was possessed of that facility which the rapidity of their execution evinces, previous to the era when his versification is supposed to have been finally settled.—When I mention these slight inaccuracies

of Dr. Johnson, for whom personally, when living, I had the greatest respect and veneration, and for whose writings I have the highest admiration, I hope not to be misunderstood. Such trivial errors can diminish little from the value of his incomparable *Lives of the Poets*, and (as I have elsewhere observed, but wish to repeat it here,) are merely specks in the finest body of criticism extant in any language.—By the composition of his various heroick plays, *THE INDIAN EMPEROR*, *TYRANNICK LOVE*, *GRANADA*, and *AURENG-ZEBE*, Dryden had unquestionably enriched his diction, and improved the harmony of his numbers. By the advice of Sir George Mackenzie, one of the Lords of Session in Scotland, and author of many learned works, about the year 1672, (as he has himself told us,)* he read over many of our elder English poets, to improve himself in beautiful turns of words and thoughts; and at that time probably composed an *Essay on the Laws of Versification*, which it is much to be regretted that Lord Mulgrave dissuaded him from publishing.† About that period, therefore, we may presume he attained all the mechanick excellence of English verse.

Thus improved by the example of others, and his own practice, he sat down to the composition of *ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL*. About fifty years before, Nathaniel Carpenter published at Dublin

* Vol. iii. p. 212.

† See vol. ii. p. 162, and vol. iii. p. 521.

"ACHITOPHEL, or the Picture of a wicked Politician;" being the substance of three sermons on 2 Sam. xvii. 23, which he had formerly preached at Oxford. This book was printed at Dublin in quarto, in 1627, and again at Oxford in the next year: but some objections being made to several passages, which were supposed to favour Arminianism, it was castrated by Laud in various places, and afterwards went through five editions, between 1629 and 1642. "The sceane (says the writer, in a Dedication to Archbishop Usher,) wherein I have bounded my discourse, presents unto your Grace a sacred tragedy, consisting of four chief actors; viz. David, an anointed King, Absolon, an ambitious Prince; Achitophel, a wicked politician; and Cushay, a loyal subject; a passage of history for variety pleasant, for instruction useful, for event admirable." Though, from the number of editions it went through, this must have been a common book, it may be doubted whether Dryden had ever seen it; for I do not find that he took a single hint from it.* Carpenter inveighs in general

* If Dryden had met with this book, he would probably have made some use of the following judicious observation, which contains an eternal truth, peculiarly applicable to our own times:

"Envy and detraction, like two venomous serpents, lurk alwaies in the paths of justice, and the best rulers seldom find the freest passage. He that goes about to persuade a multitude they are not so well governed as they ought to be, shall sooner want argument than atten-

against the inordinate ambition and subtle practices of Courtiers and Politicians; so that even supposing that his book had fallen into our author's hands, though it might have furnished him with the title, it would detract nothing from the originality, of his poem. His adaptation of the story to Shaftesbury and Monmouth was his own.⁷

Tate,⁸ who was likely to be well informed, relates, that this poem was undertaken at the desire

tion. The reason whereof (as a learned man has observed) is, because the abuses and corruptions in every State most inevitable are, for the most part, sensible to vulgar capacities; but the hindrances of reformation only apparent to men of experienced judgments."

The learned man alluded to, if I remember right, is Bacon.

⁷ After Dryden's poem appeared, (of which we have two Latin versions, one by Francis Atterbury, afterwards Bishop of Rochester, the other by Dr. Coward,) the parallel between the King and David, and Achitophel and Shaftesbury, was a frequent theme in the pulpit.— In a Satire, entitled *THE BADGER*, published a few months *before* our author's poem, (July 8, 1681,) we find Shaftesbury thus denominated:

"Some call me Tony, some *Achitophel*,

"Some Jack-a-dandy, some old Machiavel."—

But it was then doubtless known that Dryden was writing a poem on this subject; and *Achitophel* there, and in some other productions of that day, is used merely to signify a person unfaithful to his prince.

⁸ Of the early history of this voluminous versifier, who wore the laurel for four-and-twenty years, very little is

of King Charles the Second in 1680; he means, I conceive, towards the end of the year, that is, in February or March, 1680-81. If I am right in this conjecture, about nine months elapsed between its commencement and completion; for it was not published till the middle of Nov. 1681. It might however have been ready some time before, and some other works perhaps were executed during its progress. On the 28th of March, 1681, the Parliament which had been assembled at Oxford, was dissolved, and on the 2d of the following July, Shaftesbury was committed to the Tower, on a charge of High Treason; where he remained above four months. At this critical time, a few days before a bill of indictment was presented against him, appeared the poem of *ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL*. It was read with such avidity that the first edition was sold in about a month; and a second was issued out before the end of December. Two, if not three, other editions of this piece were published in 1682; and in 1684 a sixth edition ap-

known. He was born in Dublin in the year 1652, and bred in Trinity College, as appears from the entry of his admission:

" 30 Junii, 1668. Nahum Teat, Pensionarius, filius Faithfull Teat, Presbyteri, natus annos sexdecim, natus Dublinii, educatus sub magistro Savage, Belfast.—Tutor. Geo. Walker." Regr. Universitat. Dublin. Being called by the less polished of his countrymen, *Tate*, according to the ordinary Irish pronunciation, he probably, when he came to England, adopted the new spelling of his name.

peared in the first volume of our author's MISCELLANIES.

When Dryden issued his several works from the press, he in general seems to have dismissed them from his thoughts, and to have been little solicitous about rendering them more perfect. Of his carelessness in this respect the Preface to the second volume of his MISCELLANIES, published in 1685, furnishes a remarkable instance: "There is one mistake of mine," says he, [in the translation of part of the fourth book of Lucretius,] "which I will not lay to the printer's charge, who has enough to answer for, in false pointings: it is in the word *viper*. I would have the verse run thus:

The *scorpion*, love, must on the wound be bruis'd."

A few years afterwards (1692) this volume was reprinted, and in the new edition we find the very same observation in the Preface, and the same error in the text. This instance, indeed, relates only to the typographical accuracy of his works; but in the Preface to the second edition of THE INDIAN EMPEROR, he is very explicit on this subject; for having mentioned that he had corrected such errors of the press as he had observed in the former edition, he adds, "As for the more material faults of writing, which are properly mine, though I see many of them, I want leisure to amend them. It is enough for those who make one poem the business of their lives, to leave that

correct: yet, excepting Virgil, I never met with any that was so in any language,"

To his general negligence in this respect there are, however, several exceptions. The second edition of his *TYRANNICK LOVE* is said in the titlepage to have been *reviewed* by the author. When, in 1684, he had occasion to reprint his *ESSAY OF DRAMATICK POESY*, he revised it with the greatest care, and made various alterations in the language of it in almost every page,⁹ though he did not, I think, add a single sentence. From one of his letters, we learn, that he gave nine entire days to the revision of his translation of Virgil; and he made some slight improvements in *MAC-FLECKNOE*, which will be mentioned hereafter. But the most memorable change he ever made, is that found in the second edition of his *ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL*; in which, beside some verbal alterations, he introduced twelve new lines in the character of Shaftesbury, and four relative to Monmouth towards the end of the King's speech. In Shaftesbury's portrait, immediately after the words "Usurp'd a patriot's all-atoning name," these verses were added:

"So easy still it proves, in factious times,
 "With publick zeal to cancel private crimes.
 "How safe is treason, and how sacred ill,
 "When none can sin against the people's will;

⁹ At the end of this Essay, (vol. i. part ii. p. 135—149.) the principal alterations made in the second edition are noticed.

" Where crowds can wink, and no offence be known,
 " Since in another's guilt they find their own!
 " Yet fame deserved no enemy can grudge;
 " The Statesman we abhor, but praise the Judge:
 " In Israel's courts ne'er sat an Abethdin,
 " With more discerning eyes, or hands more clean;
 " Unbribed, unsought, the wretched to redress;
 " Swift of dispatch, and easy of access."

One of his adversaries' asserts, that for this addition, Dryden was paid by Shaftesbury; and a later writer has constructed upon this circumstance a curious tale, which has been given to the publick with much circumstantial precision in the new edition of the BIOGRAPHIA BRITANNICA, from the papers of either Thomas Stringer, Esq. who was Clerk of the Presentations under Shaftesbury, when Chancellor, or Benjamin Martyn, the author of TIMOLEON, a tragedy acted in 1730; but to which of these gentlemen we are indebted for the anecdote I am about to mention, does not very clearly appear. Mr. Stringer, it seems, wrote a Life of Shaftesbury, which was found among his papers at his death in 1702; and about the year 1732 his manuscript, with other papers relating to our ACHITOPHEL, was put by one of the Shaftesbury family into the hands of Mr. Martyn, with a view that he should compose a new Life of that nobleman. "Mr. Martyn," says Dr. Kippis, "made Mr. Stringer's manuscript the basis of his own work, which he enriched with such speeches of the Earl

' The author of THE WHIP AND KEY.

as are now remaining, and with several other particulars drawn from some loose papers left by his Lordship. He availed himself likewise of other means of information, which more recent publications had afforded; and prefixed to the whole an introduction of considerable length, wherein he passed very high encomiums on our great Statesman, and strengthened them by the testimonies of Mr. Locke and Mons. Le Clerc. He added also strictures on L'Estrange, Sir William Temple, Bishop Burnet, and others, who had written to his Lordship's disadvantage. One anecdote which we well remember, it cannot but be agreeable to the publick, *and to the noble family*, to see related. It is well known with what severity the Earl of Shaftesbury is treated by Dryden in his *ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL*. Nevertheless, soon after that fine satire appeared, his Lordship, having the nomination of a scholar, as Governor of the Charter-House, gave it to one of the poet's sons, *without any solicitation on the part of the father, or of any other person*. This act of generosity had such an effect upon Dryden, that, to testify his gratitude, he added, in the second edition of this poem, the *four* following lines, in celebration of the Earl's conduct as Lord Chancellor :

" In Israel's court ne'er sat an Abethdin,

" With more discerning eyes, or hands more clean ;

" Unbribed, unsought, the wretched to redress,

" Swift of dispatch, and easy of access."

" When King Charles the Second read these lines,

he told Dryden, that he had spoiled by them all which he had said before of Shaftesbury.”^a

It appears from what I have already stated, that the original relater of this tale was not half informed; for the lines inserted were not *four*, but *twelve*. Let us now examine its weight and consistency. It is not necessary for me to dwell on the monstrous improbability of a nobleman of at least a very ardent spirit, a few days after a most severe satire had appeared against him, selecting the author of it from the whole mass of mankind, as the person above all others entitled to his particular notice and liberality; which, viewed in this light, may be considered as a kind of premium for the lashes that the poet had inflicted: nor shall I waste the reader's time, or my own, by resorting to general reasoning, or balancing probabilities, because I am furnished with better evidence of the falsehood of this story than any such disquisition can supply. Our author's two elder sons, we know, were bred at Westminster School. The son therefore, here alluded to, must have been his third son, Erasmus-Henry: and to quadrate with this anecdote, he must have been admitted into

^a BIOG. BRIT. iv. 264.* 2d. edit. After the execution of Algernon Sydney, Shaftesbury's "Memoirs of his own time" were burnt by Locke, to whom they had been entrusted. A curious character of Mr. Hastings, a Dorsetshire gentleman, extracted from them, was, however, published in Howard's Collection of Letters, vol. i. p. 152. —The "*other person*," mentioned by Dr. Kippis, as the last to whom the manuscripts of Mr. Stringer, &c. were consigned, was Dr. Kippis himself, and he received £.500. for his revision of them.

the Charter-House between the 17th of November, 1681, on or about which time this memorable poem first appeared, and the end of the following month, when a second edition, *revised and augmented*, was issued out. But I have made an inquiry concerning this fact at the Charter-House, where a register of all the scholars that have been admitted on the foundation since 1680, is preserved; and the result has confirmed and increased my distrust of traditional anecdotes, many of which, on a close examination, I have found, if not wholly false, yet greatly distorted by the ignorance, or inattention, or wilful misrepresentation, of those by whom they have been transmitted from age to age. We do not indeed always find pure and absolute falsehood; but many a plausible and well-attested story, when thoroughly sifted, has too often proved what Dryden has denominated *a sophisticated truth with an alloy of lie in it*. In the present instance, however, we find no alloy; the whole is pure and unsophisticated, though perfectly free from any commixture of truth; for, from the Register of the Charter-House it appears, that our great poet's son, Erasmus-Henry, instead of being placed on that foundation in the interval between the middle of November and the end of December, 1681, that is, between the first and second edition of *ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL*, without which the anecdote must fall to the ground, was not admitted till thirteen months afterwards, Feb. 5, 1682-3; and then he was admitted a scholar there, not on the recommendation of Shaftesbury, who was at

that time dead,¹ but on the recommendation of his Sovereign, Charles the Second, as one of the Governours of that noble foundation.⁴ Whenever, therefore, the promised Life of Shaftesbury shall be given to the publick, it will be prudent to omit this marvellous tale.—Nor is the non-conformist parson's assertion, that our author was induced by a bribe to make this addition, more worthy of credit. By the masterly delineation of Shaftesbury, he had taken so decided a part against that nobleman, that, putting rectitude and honour wholly out of consideration, he could not without utter disgrace have accepted a gift from him in December, at the very time when his adherents were fabricating a Medal in memory of his recent triumph; and in that very month or the next, sit down to compose a satire against him, (grounded on that circumstance,) still more bitter,

¹ Shaftesbury died January 28, 1682-3, at Amsterdam; whither he had fled from London the preceding November.

⁴ The following notices of admissions of scholars at the Charter-House, are extracted from the Register there:

" October 6th, 1681, [six weeks before the publication of *ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL*] Samuel Weaver, admitted for the Lord Shaftesbury.

" Feb. 5th, 1682-3, Erasmus-Henry Dryden, admitted *for his Majesty* (in the room of Orlando Bagnall); aged 14 years, ad of May next.

" Nov. 2d, 1683. Erasmus Dryden and Richard Tubb left the house.

" Elected to the University."

if possible, than the former; which very soon afterwards was issued from the press. Besides, on an attentive perusal, it will be found that the new encomiastick lines are merely an amplification of a couplet which had appeared in the original poem,—out of which they grew, and to which they are immediately introductory :

“ O, had he been content to serve the crown
 “ *With virtues only proper to the gown,*
 “ Or had the rankness of the soil,” &c.

For so natural an addition, therefore, we have no occasion to look for any extraordinary cause; nor, to account for it, and to extricate the poet from embarrassment, is it necessary to suppose that here, as in the dramas of antiquity, Plutus descended in a machine.—That part of the anecdote, however, which says—that the King observed he had hurt his poem by the insertion, though probably an invention with the rest, is not unlikely to be true.*

* The four new lines respecting Monmouth, introduced in the second edition, were these. After the couplet,

“ If my young Sampson will pretend a call
 “ To shake the column, let him share the fall—

was added—

“ But O, that yet he would repent and live !
 “ How easy 'tis for parents to forgive !
 “ With how few tears a pardon might be won
 “ From nature, pleading for a darling son !”

The other variations which I have observed in the revised copy, here follow. The lines printed chiefly in the Ro-

On the 24th of November, 1681, the Grand Jury at the Old Bailey returned *Ignoramus* on the bill presented against Shaftesbury, and he was taken from the Court-House with shouts of ap-

man character, are as they appeared in the first edition; those chiefly in Italicks are transcribed from the second:

Whether inspired *with* some diviner lust—
Whether inspired by some diviner, &c.

And serv'd at once for worship and for food.
As serv'd at once for worship, &c,

Restless, unfix'd in *principle* and place.
 *in principles and place.*

Usurp'd a *patron's* all atoning name.
 *a patriot's all-atoning name.*

Then follow the twelve new lines mentioned above.

. whose extended wand,
Shuts up the seas, and shews the promised land.
Divides the seas, and shews the promised land.

And rashly judge his *writ* apocryphal.
And rashly judge his writ apocryphal.

Dissembling joy, he sets himself to show—
His joy conceal'd, he sets himself to show.

To sound the *depth*—
To sound the depths—

That power which is for property allow'd—
Add that the power for property allow'd—

But Israel was unworthy of thy *birth*.
 Short is the date of all immoderate *worth*.

In the second copy we find—*name and fame.*

clause, which lasted for an hour.⁶ To perpetuate their triumph on this occasion, his adherents soon afterwards employed George Bower, an able Sculptor, to engrave a Medal in commemoration of that event, which gave rise to Dryden's poem, entitled *THE MEDAL, OR A SATIRE AGAINST SEDITION*, written with not less poignancy and vigour than that which preceded it; for perhaps no part of *ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL* exceeds the following highly finished portrait :

- " O, could the style that copied every grace,
- " And plough'd such furrows for an eunuch face,
- " Could it have form'd his ever-changing will,
- " The various piece had tired the graver's skill.
- " A martial hero first, with early care,
- " Blown, like a pigmy by the winds, to war :
- " A beardless chief, a rebel ere a man :
- " So young his hatred to his Prince began.
- " Next this, (how wildly will Ambition steer !)
- " A vermin, wriggling in th' Usurper's ear ;
- " Bart'ring his venal wit for sums of gold,
- " He cast himself into the saint-like mould, ;
- " Groan'd, sigh'd, and pray'd, while godliness was gain,
- " The lowdest bagpipe of the squeaking train.
- " But, as 'tis hard to cheat a juggler's eyes,
- " His open lewdness he could ne'er disguise :

Jotham of ready wit, &c.

Jotham of piercing wit, &c.

Is one that would by law destroy his prince.

Is one that would by law supplant his prince.

⁶ Letter in the Paper Office, from Sir Leonine Jenkins to the Prince of Orange. Dalrymple's *MEMOIRS*, vol. i.

" There split the Saint ; for hypocritick zeal
 " Allows no sins but those it can conceal.
 " Whoring to scandal gives too large a scope ;
 " Saints must not trade, but they may interlope.
 " The ungodly principle was all the same ;
 " But a gross cheat betrays his partners' game.
 " Besides, their pace was formal, grave, and slack ;
 " His nimble wit outran the heavy pack.
 " Yet still he found his fortune at a stay,
 " Whole droves of blockheads choking up his way ;
 " They took, but not rewarded, his advice :
 " Villain and wit exact a double price.
 " Power was his aim : but, thrown from that pretence,
 " The wretch turn'd loyal in his own defence ;
 " And malice reconcil'd him to his Prince. }
 " Him in the anguish of his soul he serv'd,
 " Rewarded faster still than he deserv'd.
 " Behold him now exalted into trust ;
 " His counsel's oft convenient, seldom just :
 " Ev'n in the most sincere advice he gave,
 " He had a grudging still to be a knave.
 " The frauds he learn'd in his fanatick years
 " Made him uneasy in his lawful gears ;
 " At best, as little honest as he could,
 " And, like white witches, mischievously good,
 " To his first bias longingly he leans ;
 " And *rather* would be great by wicked means."

Of this poem, which was published in the
 middle of March 1681-2, Charles the Second is
 said to have suggested the subject.' " One day as
 the King was walking in the Mall, and talking
 with Dryden, he said, ' If I was a poet, and I

think I am poor enough to be one, I would write a poem on such a subject, in the following manner.' "He then gave him the plan of *THE MEDAL*. Dryden took the hint, carried the poem as soon as it was written, to the King, and had a present of a hundred broad pieces for it." "This," adds Mr. Spence, from whom I derive this anecdote, "was said by a priest whom I often met at Mr. Pope's : who seemed to confirm it ; and added, that King Charles obliged Dryden to put his Oxford Speech into verse, and to insert it towards the close of his *ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL*."—The only parts, however, of the King's Speech on dissolving the Parliament assembled at Oxford, which seem to have been adopted, are the following sentences in the opening and at the conclusion of it :

"The unwarrantable proceedings of the last House of Commons were the occasion of my parting with the last parliament ; for I, who will never use arbitrary government myself, am resolved not to suffer it in others. - - - - - I am unwilling to mention particulars, because I am desirous to forget faults ; but whoever shall calmly consider what offers I have formerly made, and what assurances I made to the last parliament, - - - - - and then shall reflect upon the strange unsuitable returns made to such propositions by men who were called together to *consult*, perhaps may wonder more that I had patience so long, than that at last I grew weary of their proceedings. - - - - - I conclude with this one advice to you,—that the rules and

measures of all your votes may be the known and established laws of the land, which neither can nor ought to be departed from, nor changed, but by Act of Parliament; and I may the more reasonably require that you make the laws of the land your rule, because I am resolved they shall be mine."—These passages our poet might have had in his thoughts, when he wrote the following lines :

- " What then is left, but with a jealous eye
- " To guard the small remains of Royalty ?
- " The law shall still direct my peaceful sway,
- " And the same law teach rebels to obey :
- " Votes shall no more establish'd pow'r control,
- " Such votes as make a part exceed the whole :
- " No groundless clamours shall my friends remove,
- " Nor crouds have power to punish, ere they prove :
- " For gods and god-like Kings their care express,
- " Still to defend their servants in distress.—
- " O, that my power to saving were confin'd !
- " Why am I forc'd, like heaven, against my mind,
- " To make examples of another kind ?
- " Must I at length the sword of Justice draw ?
- " O curs'd effects of necessary law !
- " How ill my fear they by my mercy scan !
- " Beware the fury of a patient man.
- " Law they require ; let Law then shew her face ;
- " They could not be content to look on Grace
- " Her hinder parts, but with a daring eye
- " To tempt the terrour of her front, and die.
- " By their own arts 'tis righteously decreed,
- " Those dire artificers of death shall bleed."

As both **ASSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL**, and **THE**

MEDAL, threw out a flag of defiance to the whole faction against whom their satire was directed, the author must have been prepared to be assailed on every side. Both these poems accordingly were opposed by numerous Answers, of many of which even the titles would have been lost to posterity but for the care and attention of a gentleman of that time, Mr. Narcissus Luttrell, who, having formed a very curious collection of Ancient English Poetry in twenty-four quarto volumes, distinguished by the letters of the alphabet, continued his Collection by purchasing the principal poetical productions that appeared in his own time, particularly those of a political kind, which he bound up in folio and quarto volumes, according to their respective sizes. He did not neglect even the single half-sheets at that period almost daily issued from the press, but preserved them with the rest ; and marked on every poem, and half-sheet, the price it cost, and the day on which he made the purchase ; which he appears generally to have made immediately after its publication. The Ancient Poetry, some years ago fell into the hands of the late Dr. Farmer, and has recently been dispersed on the sale of his books ; but fortunately five volumes in folio, consisting of lampoons, ballads, and other poetry, published between the time of the Restoration and the end of the last century, as well as several productions relating to Dryden, were purchased by my friend Mr. Bindley, (about the same time that Dr. Farmer acquired the ekler

poetry,) and are preserved entire in his very curious and valuable library. To this Collection I am indebted for the knowledge of many pieces that have contributed to illustrate our author's life and writings; and by the manuscript notices which it furnishes, am enabled to ascertain not only the precise date of some of his political poems, but the authors of the various Answers which were made to them, as well as the time of their publication.

The first part of *ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL* was published in folio, on or before the 17th of November, 1681; for Mr. Luttrell has mentioned, that on that day he received a copy of it "from his friend, Jacob Tonson." On the 10th of December, a puny champion (perhaps Henry Care, a frequent political scribbler of that time,) sent forth a half-sheet, entitled "*TOWSER the Second, a Bulldog, or a short Reply to ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL*:" a very poor thing. Four days afterwards appeared "*POETICAL REFLECTIONS on a late poem entitled ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL, by a Person of Honour*;" who, we are informed by Antony Wood, was Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. Of the merit of this poem some judgment may be formed by the extracts from it already given.* The next assailant that came into the field of controversy was a non-conformist clergyman, who

* Containing thirty-two pages, and the preface. Price one shilling.

* See p. 9, n. 9, and p. 36, n. 4.

on or before the 24th of December, published anonymously "A WHIP for the Fool's Back, who styles honourable marriage a cursed confinement, in his profane poem of ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL:" and this was followed on the 18th of January by "A KEY (with the Whip) to open the mystery and iniquity of the poem called ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL, shewing its scurrilous reflections on both King and Kingdom." In the latter piece, which was written by the same hand as the former, the author's principal object is to shew that Dryden's Jewish names were not well chosen. As probably very few of my readers have ever seen this poem, I will add a short extract :

- " How well this Hebrew name with sense doth sound,
- " *A fool's my brother,** though in wit profound !
- " Most wicked wits are the Devil's chiefest tools,
- " Which, ever in the issue, GOD befools.
- " Can thy compare, vile varlet, once hold true,
- " Of the loyal Lord, and this disloyal Jew ?
- " Was e'er our English Earl under disgrace,
- " And, as unconscionable, put out of place ?
- " Hath he laid lurking in his country-house,
- " To plot rebellions, as one factious ?
- " Thy bog-trot bloodhounds hunted have this stag,
- " Yet cannot fasten their foul fangs,—they flag.
- " Why did'st not *thou* bring in thy evidence,
- " With them, to rectify the brave Jury's sense,
- " And so prevent the *Ignoramus*?—nay,
- " Thou wast cock-sure he would be damn'd for aye,

* *Achi*, my brother, and *tophel*, a fool.—*Orig. Note.*

- " Without thy presence ;—thou wast then employ'd
- " To brand him 'gainst he came to be destroy'd :
- " Forehand preparing for the hangman's axe,
- " Had not the witnesses been found so lax."

This specimen, I conceive, is abundantly sufficient. —In *THE WHIP*, the first ten lines of Dryden's poem having been introduced, our author in the Epistle to the Whigs, prefixed to *THE MEDAL*, thus sarcastically adverts to this circumstance, and to the Hebrew learning displayed by his antagonist :

" I have one only favour to desire of you at parting,—that when you think of answering this poem, you would employ the same pens against it, who have combated with so much success against *ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL* ; for then you may assure yourselves of a clear victory, without the least reply. Rail at me abundantly, and, not to break a custom, do it without wit ; by this method you will gain a considerable point, which is wholly to wave the answer of my arguments. - - - - If God has not blessed you with the talent of rhyming, *make use of my poor stock*, and welcome ; *let your verses run upon my feet* ; and for the utmost refuge of notorious blockheads, reduced to the last extremity of sense, turn my own lines upon me ; make me satirize myself. Some of you have been driven to this bay already ; but above all the rest, commend me to the non-conformist Parson, who writ *THE WHIP AND KEY*. I am afraid it is not read so much as the piece deserves, because the

bookseller is every week crying help at the end of his Gazette, to get it off. You see I am charitable enough to do him a kindness, that it may be published as well as printed ; and that so much skill in Hebrew derivations may not lie for waste paper in the shop. Yet I half suspect he went no further for his learning than the Index of Hebrew names and etymologies, which is printed at the end of some of our English Bibles. If Achitophel signify *the brother of a fool*, the author of that poem will pass with his readers for the next of kin ; and perhaps it is the relation that makes the kindness. Whatever the verses are, buy them, I beseech you, out of pity ; for I hear the Conventicle is shut up, and the brother of Achitophel out of service."

On the 17th of January, 1681-2, was published in quarto, another anonymous Answer to ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL, entitled "AZARIA AND HUSHAI, [Monmouth and Shaftesbury] a poem," which Antony Wood ascribed to Settle ; but Dr. Johnson justly suspected that Wood was mistaken, it being extremely unlikely that Settle should write twice on the same occasion. He was right in his conjecture ; for it appears from Mr. Luttrell's copy, that AZARIA was the production of Samuel Pordage, a dramatick writer of that time, author of two original plays, and a third translated from Seneca : whose scurrility in this piece, procured him some months afterwards the

honour of a single couplet from Dryden's pen.' In this poem, consisting, like that which gave rise to it, almost wholly of characters, the writer thus describes our author :

- “ Shimei, the Poet Laureate of that age,
- “ The falling glory of the Jewish stage,
- “ Who scourged the priest, and ridiculed the Plot,
- “ Like common men must not be quite forgot.
- “ Sweet was the Muse that did his wit inspire,
- “ Had he not let his hackney Muse to hire :
- “ But variously his knowing Muse could sing,
- “ Could Doeg praise, and could blaspheme the King ;
- “ The bad make good, good bad, and bad make worse,
- “ Bless in heroicks, and in satires curse.
- “ Shimei to Zabad's¹ praise could tune his Muse,
- “ And princely Azaria could abuse.
- “ Zimri, we know, he had no cause to praise,
- “ Because he dubb'd him with the name of BAYES :
- “ Revenge on him did bitter venom shed,
- “ Because he tore the laurel from his head ;
- “ Because he durst with his proud wit engage,
- “ And brought his follies on the publick stage.
- “ Tell me, Apollo, for I can't divine
- “ Why wives he curs'd, and prais'd the concubine ;
- “ Unless it were that he had led his life
- “ With a teeming matron, ere she was a wife ;
- “ Or that it best with his dear Muse did suit,
- “ Who was for hire a very prostitute.”

Elkanah Settle's Answer, which appeared ano-

- “ Some in my speedy pace I must outrun.
- “ As lame *Mephibosheth*, the wizard's son.”

ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL, P. II.

- “ Oliver Cromwell.

nymously on the 6th of April, under the title of "ABSALOM SENIOR, OR ACHITOPHEL transposed, a poem," if not more animated, was, like its author, more ponderous,¹ than any that preceded; for it consists of thirty-eight pages in folio, containing about fifteen hundred lines. In this poem, in which he is said to have been assisted by Spratt and some other hands,⁴ perhaps it was first suggested that Dryden once intended to have gone into holy orders:

- " But Amiel³ has, alas! the fate to hear
- " An angry poet play his chronicler;
- " A poet rais'd above Oblivion's shade,
- " By his recorded verse immortal made.
- " But, Sir, his livelier figure to engrave
- " With branches added to the bays you gave,
- " No Muse could more heroick feats rehearse;
- " Had with an equal all-applauding verse
- " Great David's sceptre and Saul's javelin prais'd,
- " A pyramid to his saint, interest, rais'd.

³ In "A Litany from Geneva, in answer to that from St. Omers," a half-sheet published in June, 1689, are these lines:

- " From Jenkins's Homilies, drawn through the nose,
- " From Langley, Dick, Baldwin, and all such as those,
- " And from *brawny* Settle's poem in prose,

Libera nos."

⁴ It has been suggested in the Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope, that Martin Clifford assisted Settle in the composition of this poem; but he could not have been one of his coadjutors, for he died four years before it was written.

⁵ George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham.

" For which religiously no change he miss'd,
 " From commonwealth's-man up to royalist ;
 " *Nay, would have been his own loath'd thing, call'd* }
 priest :
 " Priest, whom with so much gall he doth describe,
 " 'Cause once unworthy thought of Levi's tribe.
 " Near those bright towers, where Art has wonders }
 done,
 " And at his feet proud Jordan's waters run ;
 " Where David's sight glads the blest summer's sun,
 " A cell there stands, by pious founders rais'd,
 " Both for its wealth and learned Rabbins prais'd :
 " To this did an ambitious bard aspire,
 " To be no less than lord of that blest choir,
 " Till wisdom deem'd so sacred a command
 " A prize too great for his unhallow'd hand."

Many other writers⁶ have also suggested that our author was originally intended for the Church, but undoubtedly they were mistaken ; for in the Preface to his FABLES, he positively asserts that he never had this object in his thoughts.

THE MEDAL, which, we have seen, was published on or before the 16th of March, 1681-2,⁷ produced several Answers, the authors of which

⁶ Dryden's " Satire to his Muse," 4to. 1682. " The Laureate," fol. 1687. Langbaine's " Account of the Dramatick Poets," 1691. T. Brown's " Reasons of Mr. Bayes's changing his Religion," 4to. 1688. " Milbourne's Notes on Dryden's Virgil," 8vo. 1698.

⁷ MS. Luttrell.—This poem consists of twenty pages, beside the prefatory matter; and, like all the small quarto poems of that time, of about four or five sheets, was sold for sixpence.

vented their rage in scandalous accusations, either wholly without foundation, or greatly overcharged. Of the dispatch with which the first of these was written, consisting of seven folio pages of poetry and ten of prose, the anonymous author boasts in the following whimsical title: "THE MUSHROOM, or a Satyr against libelling Tories and prelatical Tantivies; in answer to a Satyr against Sedition, called THE MEDAL, by the Author of ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL; and here answered by the Author of the Black Nonconformist, *the next day after the publication of THE MEDAL*; to help the sale thereof." From the writer's Postscript, which explains his equivocal titlepage, we learn that the *poem* was written and *sent to the press* the day after THE MEDAL was published; and in six days afterwards, (March 23,) according to Mr. Luttrell's copy, THE MUSHROOM appeared. The author, as the same gentleman has noted, was the celebrated Edmund Hickerlingill.*

THE MEDAL REVERSED, a poem printed anonymously in quarto, which has also been ascribed to Settle, but was written by Samuel Pordage, ap-

* The author of a noted political sermon, entitled—"CURSE YE MEROZ, or the fatal Doom," preached (on Judges, v. 23,) in Guildhall Chapel, before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London, May 9, 1680. Of this person, who was Chaplain to Elizabeth, Duchess of Albemarle, and Rector of All-Saints, Colchester, some account may be found in ATH. OXON. ii. 369, where Wood, by mistake, calls him *Henry* Hickerlingill.

peared on the 31st of March ; and **THE LOYAL MEDAL VINDICATED**, of which I know not the author, on the 8th of April. **THE MEDAL OF JOHN BAYES**, a poem ascribed by Mr. Luttrell to Shadwell, was produced on the 15th of May. There seems to have been a cessation of hostilities from this period to the 4th of September, when **THE TORY POETS**, a Satire, was published in quarto ; a very gross libel, directed chiefly against our author and Otway,⁹ which has always been attributed to the same person. In this lampoon, as in **THE MEDAL OF JOHN BAYES**, Shadwell's weapon has much more resemblance to a hatchet than a razor : however, he appears to have sedulously collected all the ill that could be told of Dryden, and without doubt drew some blood. About the same time probably appeared the poem entitled **DRYDEN'S SATIRE TO HIS MUSE**, a piece equally severe with that last mentioned, of which the author has never been discovered. Pope assures us, that Lord Somers, to whom it has been ascribed, " was wholly ignorant of it ;" but if Somers had

⁹ Otway had not only supported by his pen the party which Shadwell and Settle opposed, but had some personal quarrel with the latter, in consequence of which they had fought :

" The laurel makes a wit ; a brave, the sword ;

" And all are wise men at a Council-board :

" Settle's a coward, 'cause fool Otway fought him,

" And Mulgrave is a wit, because I taught him."

THE TORY POETS, 4to. 1682.

written any part of that libel, (we cannot suppose him to have written the scandalous part of it,) thirty years before he was acquainted with Pope,¹ is it probable, that he would have made a young author of four-and-twenty the depository of his secret? Two years before this satire was published, he had appeared as a poet; and near two hundred lines of it, that is, nearly two parts out of three, are a political encomium and vindication of the Whigs, without any offensive personality, couched in such moderate poetry as is found in Somers's acknowledged poetical productions.

It is highly probable that our author's variance with Shadwell arose from his being strongly attached to the Whigs, as Dryden was to the Tories. In the Preface to his *SULLEN LOVERS*, a comedy published in 1668, Shadwell observes, that, "Some have been so *insolent* of late as to say—that Ben Jonson wanted wit;" alluding evidently to our author's *ESSAY OF DRAMATICK POESY*, then newly published. This was the first offence, but not mortal; for in the Preface to *THE HUMOURISTS* in 1676, he speaks of Dryden as his particular friend; and in 1678-9 they were on such good terms, that Dryden wrote a Prologue for Shadwell's *TRUE WIDOW*,² acted and published in that year: but

¹ Pope's acquaintance with Lord Somers could not well have commenced till about the year 1711, or 1712.

² Some years afterwards, the same Prologue was spoken and printed before a comedy written by Mrs. Behn, called "*THE WIDOW RANTER, or the History of Bacon* in

from the dissolution of Charles's second Parliament in July, 1679, the two hostile bodies into which the State was then divided, became so embittered against each other, that little amity could have subsisted between the inferior champions, who by their writings supported the opposing parties. Afterwards, during the years 1680, 1681, and 1682, the playhouses were applied to political purposes; and while Settle's *POPE JOAN*, and Shadwell's *LANCASHIRE WITCHES*, were received with unbounded applause by the Whigs, Dryden, Otway, D'Urfey, and Crowne, who warmly supported the Tories, lashed their opponents in Prologues and Epilogues, as well as in *THE DUKE OF GUISE*, and *VENICE PRESERVED*; and in their turn were attacked in various lampoons.' In the Prologue to

Virginia;" in consequence of which circumstance, and of our author's variance with Shadwell, it appears in Dryden's *MISCELLANIES*, without any notice of its having been written originally for him.

It is singular that Jacob Tonson, on the 20th of November, 1689, should have entered in the Stationers' Register—"the Prologue and Epilogue to the History of Bacon in Virginia, written by Mr. Dryden;" though the former had been in print ten years. The Epilogue in the printed copy of Mrs. Behn's play is not ascribed to our author.

- 1 "The people's voice, of old the voice of God,
- "Thou call'st the voice of an unruly crowd:
- "Crowds are the fools,—
- "That flock to thine and D'Urfey's *loyal* plays,
- "And give implicit claps on your third days.

that celebrated tragedy, which was first produced in February, 1680-81,⁴ the description of Antonio, who in the play is said to be just sixty-one years old,⁵ undoubtedly was intended for Shaftesbury.

In his *ABSALOM*, it is observable, our author did not condescend to notice any of the minor agents of the faction which he so severely reprobated. They, however, with "much malice mingled with *no wit*," during the greater part of the year 1682, exhibited in miserable poetry the vilest accusations against him; and in the Preface to *THE MEDAL OF JOHN BAYES*, Shadwell goes so far as to say, "that no man can think him hardly dealt with, since he knows, and so do all his old acquaintance, that there is not an untrue word spoken of him:" a very impudent assertion, which could not be true; for in that piece Dryden is represented as boasting of crimes, which, had he been guilty of them, must have branded his name with infamy. Shadwell had also, as our author himself has told

"About the stage of mountebank they wait,

"And whoop at cudgels or a broken pate;

"But have, like thee, no interest in the State."

SATIRE TO HIS MUSE, by the Author of
Abfalom and *Achitophel*, 4to. 1682.

⁴ Dr. Johnson supposed that *VENICE PRESERVED* was Otway's last play; but that was not the case: he produced after that tragedy, *THE ATHEIST*, a comedy.

⁵ Otway, however, was not quite correct, for Lord Shaftesbury was born July 22, 1621: he was not therefore quite sixty.

us, frequently in print called him an Atheist.—Roused at length by these repeated libels, on the 4th of October, 1682, he published his admirable satire entitled **MAC-FLECKNOE**,⁶ in which he has taken ample vengeance on his corpulent antagonist. **THE BIOGRAPHIA BRITANNICA**, the **LIVES OF THE POETS**, compiled by Shiels, Coxeter, and the younger Cibber,⁷ and Derrick in his *Life of Dry-*

⁶ It was published originally in quarto, not by Jacob Tonson, but by D. Green, with the following title:—**"MAC-FLECKNOE, or a Satyr upon the true-blew Protestant Poet, T. S. By the Author of ABSALOM and ACHITOPHEL."** It consists of one sheet and a half, and the price was only two-pence. At the end of the original edition is the following odd advertisement:

"A gentleman having a curious collection of poetry by the most ingenious of the age, intends to oblige the world with a poem every Wednesday morning, and with all new ones as they come to his hand."

⁷ The statement in Cibber's **LIVES OF THE POETS**, is curious. The writer supposed that the new Laureate, made in the room of Dryden after the Revolution, was *Richard Flecknoe*, "for whom he had a confirmed aversion, in consequence of which he wrote a satire against him, called **MAC-FLECKNOE**." The writer seems to have thought that *Mac* and *Anti* were synonymous.—Derrick was not much more fortunate. "Shadwell (says he) is the true hero of the piece. As for *Richard Mac-Flecknoe, Esq.* from whom the poem derives its name, he was an Irish priest," &c.

Flecknoe himself our author has elsewhere treated with boundless contempt. This poor poetaster, however, who died about the year 1678, wrote a copy of verses in praise

den, have all represented this celebrated poem as having been written in 1689, in consequence of his being then divested of the office of Laureate ; and some or other of them led Dr. Johnson into the same error.

To those who have an opportunity of perusing the many malicious and scurrilous libels against Dryden, issued out in the course of this year, his retaliation in this exquisite satire will appear extremely mild and moderate. What number of editions it passed through in a separate form, I am unable to ascertain, having only seen the first edition in quarto, which has been just mentioned. It was republished by Tonson in the first volume of Dryden's MISCELLANIES, early in 1684, with a few slight alterations, which, to gratify the curious reader, I shall give below :^a and probably a second, if not

of Dryden ; and perhaps furnished him with an image which he has happily improved in the well-known lines on Settle :

“ He was too warm on picking-work to dwell,
 “ But fagotted his notions, as they fell,
 “ And, if they rhym'd and rattled, all was well.” }

“ For his learning, (says Flecknoe, describing a school-boy.) 'tis all capping verses, and *fagoting* poets' loose lines, which fall from him as disorderly as fagot-sticks, when the band is broke.” ENIGMATICAL CHARACTERS, 8vo, 1658, p. 77.

^a About thy boat the little fishes throng,
 And gently waft the [thee] over all along.—1st ed.
 As at the morning toast, that floats along.—1684.

a third, impression in quarto had been previously dispersed. Shadwell, a few years afterwards, in the Dedication of a very contemptible translation of

Thou wield'st thy *paper*—1st ed.

Thou wield'st thy *papers*—1684.

From near Bunhill, *to* distant Watling-street.—1st ed.

From near Bunhill, *and* distant, &c.—1684.

High on a *state*, of his own labours rear'd :—1st edit.

High on a *throne*, of, &c.—1684.

And lambent dullness play'd *about* his face. 1st ed.

..... *around* his face. 1684.

That he *to* death true dullness would maintain ; 1st ed.

That he *till* death, &c. 1684.

Would bid defiance unto wit and sense. 1st ed.

Ne'er to have peace with wit, nor truce with sense.
1684.

Was placed a mighty mug—1st ed.

He placed, &c.

His temples, last, with *poppy* were o'erspread,—1st ed.

..... with *poppies* were o'erspread,—1684.

The *advancing* throng loud acclamations make,

And omens of *the* future empire take ;—1st ed.

The *admiring* throng, &c.

And omens of *his* future, &c.—1684.

And from his brows damps of oblivion shed :

Full of the filial dullness long he stood—1st ed.

And from his brows damps of oblivion shed

Full *on* the filial dulness : long he stood, &c.—1684.

Beyond LOVE'S KINGDOM may he stretch his pen !—
1st edit.

..... *let* him stretch, &c.—1684.

Juvenal's Tenth Satire, (a happy foil to our poet's excellent version of the same piece,) had the audacity to assert, that when he taxed Dryden with being the author of MAC-FLECKNOE, "he denied it with all the execrations he could think of."—It is certain, however, that in the List of his Poems, which he subjoined, in 1690, to one of his plays, he did not enumerate either this satire or the Eulogy on Cromwell; but the omission of MAC-FLECKNOE in that list probably arose from delicacy, and the peculiar situation in which he then stood. In such an authoritative catalogue of his

Pangs without birth, a fruitless industry.—1st. ed.

Pangs without birth, *and* fruitless, &c. 1684.

Let gentle George *with* triumph—1st ed.

Let gentle George *in* triumph—1684.

Let them be all *of* thy own model made—1st ed.

. *by* thy own model—&c. 1684.

Not copies drawn, but *issues* of thine own.—1st ed.

. but *issue*, &c.—1684.

But let no alien *Sydney* interpose—1st ed.

. *S—dl-y* 1684.

But write thy best *on th' top*, and in each line

Sir Formal's oratory *wit* be thine:—1st ed.

But write thy best *and top*, and in each line

Sir Formal's oratory *will* be thine:—1684.

. that boasted bias of *the* mind,—1st ed.

. *thy* mind,—1684.

And down they sent the yet *declining* bard:—1st ed.

. the yet *declaiming* bard:—1684.

Two or three of these variations, however, are manifestly *mere corrections* of errors of the press.

poetical works, he might not wish publicly to avow himself the author of so bitter a satire on one whom his old friend, and at this time recent benefactor, thought worthy of that laurel which had been wrested from his own head.

Shadwell's reasoning on the propriety of the title of this poem furnishes a proof of the truth and accuracy of our author's delineation. Not being conscious, it should seem, that he is described as the *poetical* son of Flecknoe, and in sober sadness supposing himself represented as a native of Ireland, he expresses his wonder at Dryden's stupidity; which, he says, shews clearly that "*he is not the dullest of mankind ;*" and asks, "what possible reason can the author have for giving me the Irish name of MAC, *when he knows I never saw Ireland till I was three-and-twenty years old, and was there but four months ?*"

When MAC-FLECKNOE is perused, it is not easy to suppose that the writer should be able shortly afterwards to produce another satire of still more poignancy, on the same person ; yet I know not whether the character of *Og*, which appeared in the Second Part of *ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL*, in less than a month after MAC-FLECKNOE, (Nov. 10, 1682,) is not entitled to that praise. Of the greater portion of the Second Part Tate was the author ; but Dryden, having in the original work confined himself to the great political leaders of the party which he opposed, afterwards extended his satire to the hirelings of the cause, "priests

without grace, and poets without wit ;" and enriched the continuation of his poem with near two hundred lines, in which are found, beside the highly-finished portraits of Shadwell and Settle¹ under the names of OG and DOGG, the characters of Ferguson, a turbulent incendiary in the pay of Shaftesbury, under the name of JUDAS, and of Samuel Johnson under that of BEN JOCHANAN, with three or four other scribblers of less note, all wrought with equal felicity as those of ZIMRI and ACHITOPHEL.

In the same month in which the Second Part of ABSALOM appeared, was published his RELIGIO LAICI, a philosophical poem, which, though considered by Dr. Johnson as a composition of great excellence, seems to have been little read ; for it did not in his life-time reach to a second edition. In this piece, which is addressed to a young friend of the author, who had recently translated Father Simon's "Critical History of the Old Testament,"

¹ Settle, in addition to his other offences, had attacked our author in a Prologue to one of his plays, then entitled "THE EMPEROR OF MOROCCO, *with the Death of Gayland*:" which was acted at the Theatre Royal, on the 11th of March, 1681-2 :

" . . . poets, we all know, can change, like you,
 " And are alone to their own interest true ;
 " Can write against all sense, nay ev'n their own :
 " The vehicle call'd *pension* makes it down.
 " *No fear of cudgels*, where there's hope of bread ;
 " A well-fill'd paunch forgets a *broken head*."

of whom I have only been able to discover that the initial letters of his names were H. D.¹, though the subject is of so very different a nature from the political and personal controversy in which he had for some time been engaged, he yet contrived to find occasion for sarcasm, and to have one parting stroke at the hero of his recent satire; for it concludes with the following apology for the familiar style in which the poem is written:

" And this unpolish'd rugged verse I chose,
 " As fittest for discourse, and nearest prose;
 " For while from sacred truth I do not swerve,
 " Tom Sternhold's or Tom Shadwell's rhyme will
 serve."

Dryden's intimacy with Southerne, which appears to have continued uninterrupted till his death, probably commenced soon after the publication of the First Part of ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL; for in February, 1681-2, he furnished the young poet with the Prologue and Epilogue to his first play, called the LOYAL BROTHER. As the birth-place of this amiable man, who seems to have been much beloved by his contemporaries, has been mistated by Antony Wood, it may not be improper here to mention, that he was born in

¹ In Dryden's MISCELLANIES, vol. ii. p. 452, 8vo. 1685, is a poem "on the late ingenious translation of Pere Simon's Critical History, by H. D. Esq.;" and the work itself is advertised by Jacob Tonson, as translated by H. D.

the county of Dublin, in the year 1659, as appears from the Register of the University of Dublin, where he was admitted a student in his seventeenth year, March 30, 1676.¹ At the time, therefore,

¹ "1676. Martii trigesimo die. Thomas Southerne, Pensionarius, filius Francisci Southerne, annum agens septemdecimum, natus in comitatu Dublinii, educatus apud Edw. Whitenhall, SS. Th. Doct. Tutor. Ægid. Pooly." Regr. Univer. Dublin.

Antony Wood having erroneously asserted that this poet was the son of George Southerne, of Stratford upon Avon, and was bred as a Servitor at Pembroke College, in Oxford, Southerne wrote the following letter to Dr. Richard Rawlinson, who above sixty years ago designed to publish a Continuation of Wood's work, for which he had collected many materials, now in the Bodleian library. The letter is preserved in Rawlinson's copy of the *ATHENÆ OXONIENSES*:

"SIR,

"I received your letter, with Mr. Anstis's enclosed. This is to assure you, that I had no title to have my name in the *ATHENÆ OXONIENSES*; for I was born in Dublin, and bred up in the college of Dublin, and was never a Servitor, but spent my own money there: many better men have been Servitors, but I never was. Whatever is mentioned of me in the last edition of that book, is scandalously false in fact or circumstance, in every particular: therefore you will do a justice to the truth and me, to leave me out of the edition, and make me some reparation for the abuse done me in that defamatory character.

"You mention plays that I wrote. If you have a mind to have the names of what I have wrote, I have ten in

that his first play was performed, he was but three-and-twenty. His second production, *THE DISAPPOINTMENT*, which appeared in April, 1684, had also the aid of our author's Muse, for to that piece he contributed a Prologue; and in 1692 he soothed his friend in a consolatory paper of verses on the ill success of his *WIVES EXCUSE*, which he tells us was not *damned*, but *dismissed with kind civility from the scene*. In the preceding summer, so high was Dryden's opinion of his talents, that being unable from illness to finish *CLEOMENES*, he consigned it to the care of Southerne, who wrote one

print; viz. *The Loyal Brother, or Persian P.*:—*The Disappointment, or Mother in Fashion*:—*Sir Anthony Love, or the Rambling Lady*:—*The Wives Excuse, or Cuckolds make themselves*:—*The Fatal Marriage, or the Innocent Adultery*:—*The Maids last Prayer, or Any Thing rather than fail*:—*The Fate of Capua*:—*Oroonoko*:—*The Spartan Dame*:—*Money the Mistress*.

I must tell you that I was an Ensign upon the Duke of Monmouth's landing, in Earl Ferrers' regiment, and a Lieutenant in the regiment, before the Duke of Berwick had it; so that I turn'd soldier before the Revolution.—If any thing I have said here will be of any use, more than leaving me out of that book, and doing me justice in my character, you will much oblige, Sir,

“Your most humble Servant,

“*THO. SOUTHERNE.*”

From Mr. Whyte's, Oilman, in
Tothill-street, against Dart-
mouth-street, Thursday, 17th
of November, 1787.

half of the fifth act of that tragedy, and was with reason highly flattered by this mark of the author's confidence and esteem.

His friendship for Nat Lee, with whom he joined in writing two plays, commenced at an earlier period; for Lee, in 1674, wrote some encomiastick verses on *THE STATE OF INNOCENCE*, and our author repaid him by several Prologues, and an Epistle prefixed in 1677 to his *RIVAL QUEENS*. For this poet, who like our author, was bred at Trinity College in Cambridge, but at a later period, Dryden seems to have had great kindness; and probably he was not unworthy of it, for he was very generally called by his contemporaries—"honest Nat Lee."

Whether from weariness and indisposition to the drama, as he hints in the Dedication of *AURENG-ZEBE*, or from a notion that his time might be more profitably employed, in 1683 our author discontinued writing for the stage. He appears about this time to have been much distressed, in consequence of the tardy payment of his salary; and now stood so high, even in the opinion of his adversaries, that they made him lucrative offers, for the purpose of silencing the powerful battery by which they had so much suffered: but these solicitations, however straitened in his circumstances, he had firmness enough to resist. Finding his embarrassments increasing, he thus modestly stated his merits and his claims, in a letter which seems to have been written at this period, and to have been ad-

dressed to Laurence, Earl of Rochester : " I would plead (says he) a little merit, and some hazards of my life from the common enemies ; my refusing advantages offered by them, and neglecting my beneficial studies, for the King's service ; but I only think I merit not to starve. I never applied myself to any interest, contrary to your Lordship's ; and on some occasions, perhaps not known to you, have not been unserviceable to the memory and reputation of my lord, your father. After this, my Lord, my conscience assures me, I may write boldly, though I cannot speak to you. I have three sons, growing to man's estate. I breed them all up to learning, beyond my fortune ; but they are too hopeful to be neglected, though I want. Be pleased to look on me with an eye of compassion : some small employment would render my condition easy. The King is not unsatisfied of me : the Duke has often promised me his assistance ; and your Lordship is the conduit through which their favours pass. Either in the Customs, or the Appeals of the Excise, or some other way, means cannot be wanting, if you please to have the will. 'Tis enough for one age to have neglected Mr. Cowley, and starved Mr. Butler ; but neither of them had the happiness to live till your Lordship's ministry. In the mean time, be pleased to give me a gracious and a speedy answer to my present request of half a year's pension for my necessities. I am going to write somewhat by his Majesty's command ; and cannot stir into the country for my health and studies, till I secure my

family from want."⁶ - - - I know not what was the issue of this application ; but am willing to hope that one part of his request was immediately attended to, though another was certainly neglected ; for he never obtained either of the offices he solicited, or any other equivalent.—The work alluded to was probably the translation of Maimbourg's *HISTORY OF THE LEAGUE*, which he published in 1684.

The old version of the *Lives of Plutarch*, by Sir Thomas North, having become somewhat obsolete, a new translation of that most instructive and valuable work was undertaken by a "mob of gentlemen," many of them bred at Cambridge, and friends of our author. Among the translators the most eminent were, Creech, Duke, Knightly Chetwood, John Caryll, Rymer, Dr. Brown, the traveller, Dr. William Oldys, and Mr. Somers, afterwards Lord Chancellor. To this work Dryden contributed, it should seem, the prefatory Advertisement,* and a very pleasing Life of that amiable historian, to whom we are more indebted for the characters of the most celebrated persons of Greece and Rome, and a thousand interesting circumstances relating to them, than to all the ancients besides. This translation, of which the first volume was published in 1683,⁷ though very unequally and imper-

⁶ See the Letters in this volume, N^o V. The letter in question appears to have been written in 1684.

^{*} See vol. ii. p. 424, n. 6 ; and vol. iii. p. 388, n. 7.

⁷ The first volume of Plutarch's *Lives*, with the Life

fectly executed, continued, with all its defects, to be generally read from that time to the year 1758, when the proprietor put it into the hands of Samuel Dyer, Esq., a man of excellent taste and profound erudition; whose principal literary work, under a Roman signature, when the veil with which for near thirty-one years it has been enveloped, shall be removed, will place him in a high rank among English writers, and transmit a name, now little known, with distinguished lustre to posterity. He revised the whole of the former translation, comparing it with, and correcting it by, the Greek original; but translated only two of the lives anew.* A very good version of Plutarch's Lives having since been made, that Mr. Dyer did not do more, is the less to be regretted.†

of Plutarch, was entered in the Stationers' Books by Jacob Tonson, April 25, 1683.

* Demetrius and Pericles.

† Though I was not acquainted with this gentleman, nor ever saw him, I take this opportunity of vindicating his fame; having learned from the late Sir Joshua Reynolds, and other respectable persons, that he was a very learned, virtuous, and amiable man. He was born about the year 1725; was bred at Northampton, under the care of Dr. Doddridge; and for some time had the benefit of being instructed by the learned Dr. John Ward, Professor of Rhetorick in Gresham College. He afterwards studied under Professor Hutcheson at Glasgow; from which place he was removed to Leyden, where he completed his education. In 1759 he became a Commissary in our army in Germany, and continued in that station to the end of the seven years' war: after which, he returned into England; and, on the formation of the LITERARY CLUB in 1764,

Having a few years before translated some of the Epistles of Ovid, Dryden proceeded now to

he was the first member *delected* into that very respectable Society; with whom he continued to associate, and by whom he was highly esteemed, to the time of his death, in September, 1772.—From an excellent portrait of this gentleman, painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds, a mezzotinto print was scraped by his pupil Marchi; of which a copy was made for the edition of the ENGLISH POETS, published by the booksellers of London in 1779, and erroneously prefixed to the works of *John Dyer*, the author of THE FLEECES, and other poetical compositions.

Mr. Samuel Dyer is acknowledged, even by an enemy, to have been "an excellent classical scholar, a great mathematician and natural philosopher, well versed in the Hebrew, and master of the Latin, French, and Italian languages. Added to these endowments, he was of a temper so mild, and in his conversation so modest and unassuming, that he engaged the attention and affection of all around him. In all questions of science, Dr. Johnson looked up to him; and in his Life of Watts among the Poets, [where he calls him "the late learned Mr. Dyer."] has cited an observation of his,—that Watts had confounded the idea of space with that of *empty* space, and did not consider, that though space might be without matter, yet matter, being extended, could not be without space."

Such is the testimony borne to Mr. Dyer's worth and attainments, by one who was once his intimate friend; but he has added to it such a representation of his moral character, as, if it were correct, ought to brand his name to all posterity. Some of the charges brought against him are extremely curious. 1. That having been intended and bred by his parents for the ministry, he did *not* become a dissenting teacher. 2. That he did *not* translate Dr. Daniel Williams's religious tracts into Latin. 3. That he frequently partook of dinners, and suppers, and

clothe with English verse detached portions of Virgil, Horace, and Theocritus; and adding to

card-parties, at the houses of his friends. 4. That he began to translate a book from the French, but *abandoned* that work. 5. That he would *not* undertake to write the life of Erasmus. 6. That the tenderness of his heart so far got the better of his regard to decorum, that he frequently visited a dear male friend and fellow-student, who happened to be seized with a malignant disorder, in a house of ill fame. 7. That he was much captivated by the learning, wit, politeness, and elegance of his friend; qualifications of which, we are told, Mr. Dyer, as a *philosopher*, ought not to have been emulous.—To such accusations no answer is necessary; but two others, of a very different complexion, require to be stated in the author's own words:

"It was *whispered* to me by one who *seemed* pleased that he was in the secret, that Mr. Dyer's religion was that of Socrates. What *farther advances* he made in Theism, I could not learn; *nor will I venture to assert* that which *some* expressions that I have heard *drop* from him led me to *fear*, viz. that he denied, in the philosophical sense of the term, the freedom of the human will, and settled in materialism and its consequent tenets."

On this statement it is only necessary to observe, that there is no man whose orthodoxy may not be questioned, if such evidence as is here produced, be admitted. What Mr. Dyer's religious opinions were, I have no means of knowing; but common charity forbids our assent to so vague, conjectural, and unsupported a charge; nor is it by any means probable, that so excellent an understanding as Mr. Dyer is known to have possessed, should have been bewildered or shaken by the gloomy sophistry of Deists or Infidels. Very different kind of proof than—

these translations some of his smaller poems and occasional Prologues and Epilogues already pub-

"it was *whispered* to me," and "*I will not venture to assert,*" &c. will be required by every candid man, before he acquiesces in the belief of what this writer was so very *fearful* was the case, or suppose that a person of extraordinary talents, who was extremely beloved by many worthy men, was a fatalist and an unbeliever.

To finish this dark portrait, we are further told, that — "About the time of this event [some pecuniary losses], he was seized with a quinsy, which *he was assured* was mortal; but whether he *resigned himself* to the slow operations of that disease, or *precipitated his end by an act of self-violence*, was, and yet is, a question among his friends."

What at the time of Mr. Dyer's decease were the conversation or opinions of his friends, this writer had little means of learning; for, for some years before that event, I know, several of them held with him no intercourse whatsoever. And I think it but common justice further to add, that on inquiry several years ago, from some friends of unquestionable authority, who were well acquainted with Mr. Dyer, and had sufficient means of being truly informed, I learned, that for the foregoing uncharitable suggestion there was not the slightest ground; that gentleman, to the knowledge of several persons who attended him in his last illness, having died a natural death, in consequence of that dangerous disorder, a quinsy, in spite of the best medical assistance, proving fatal to him; to the great grief of his surviving friends, one of whom, a gentleman of distinguished talents, virtue, and piety, honoured his memory with the following eulogium, which was published in a newspaper of the day, and which it cannot be supposed such a man would have written in commemoration of an infidel and a suicide :

lished, produced in 1683-4,⁹ the first volume of a MISCELLANY, which was partly composed of the productions of others. This was the first collection of that kind which had appeared for many years in England. Some months afterwards he again reverted to politicks, by publishing THE HISTORY OF THE LEAGUE,¹ translated by the King's command, from the French of Maimbourg, with a Dedication to his Majesty, and some original observations sub-

" On Tuesday morning [Sept. 14th, 1772,] died at his lodgings in Castle-street, Leicester Fields, Samuel Dyer, Esq. Fellow of the Royal Society. He was a man of profound and general erudition; and his sagacity and judgment were fully equal to the extent of his learning. His mind was candid, sincere, and benevolent; his friendship disinterested and unalterable. The modesty, simplicity, and sweetness of his manners rendered his conversation as amiable as it was instructive, and endeared him to those few who had the happiness of knowing intimately that valuable unostentatious man; and his death is to them a loss irreparable."

I shall add but one word more. When the great and amiable Lord Essex was strongly pressed to put Raleigh on a Court Martial for disobedience of orders, he replied,—" That I would do, *if he were my friend*."—If the writer of the very unfavourable character which has been now examined, who was certainly *not* Mr. Dyer's friend for some years before his death, had been governed by this generous sentiment, this long note would have been unnecessary.

⁹ A book entitled " Miscellany Poems, containing a new translation of Virgil's Eclogues," was entered in the Stationers' Register by Jacob Tonson, Feb. 4, 1683-4.

¹ " The History of the League, Englished by Mr.

ined to the work ; which appears to have been undertaken, not so much with the hopes of promoting popery, (which Dr. Johnson supposed,) as to shew that the Sectaries and the Long Parliament, in their solemn Covenant, had the French eaguers in view ; and that all the disciples of Calvin, to the hundredth generation, must continue to hate monarchy and to love democracy. In a letter to Jacob Tonson, written, as I conjecture, in August or September, 1684, he mentions that he heard with great satisfaction that this work was commended ; and adds, " I hope the only thing I feared in it, is not found out : "—but to what he alludes, I have not been able to discover.

Early in the following year (1685)^a appeared a second volume of MISCELLANIES, consisting almost entirely of new productions ; to which our author contributed a Critical Preface ; various translations from Virgil, Lucretius, and Theocritus ; and four odes from Horace, two of which were addressed to his noble friends, Wentworth, Earl of Roscommon, and Laurence, Earl of Rochester. A few days afterwards he was deprived of his royal master, who died on the 5th of Feb. 1684-5. Before his death our author had composed a political Opera,

by Ryden, by his Majesty's express command," was entered by Jacob Tonson, in the same register, April 2, 1684 ; and again January 10, 1684-5.

^a " SYLVA, or the second part of Poetical Miscellanies," was entered at Stationers' Hall, by Jacob Tonson, Jan. 10, 1684-5.

entitled **ALBION AND ALBANUS**, which had been rehearsed before his Majesty, who, he says, was a good judge of musick, and expressed himself highly pleased with the performance. Whatever may have been the merits of the musical composer of this opera,* Mons. Grabut, of whom that unquestionable judge, Dr. Burney, has but a mean opinion, the moral of the piece could not but have been very grateful to his Majesty; the object of the poet, as he has himself told us, being, to represent and celebrate the *new Restoration* of the King, in consequence of the discomfiture of Shaftesbury and his adherents: a thought which he had before versified in the concluding lines of his memorable poem:

" Henceforth a series of new time began,
 " The mighty years in long procession ran:
 " *Once more* the godlike David was restored,
 " And willing nations knew their lawful lord."

The performance of this opera, which was printed in folio in 1685, having been prevented by the death of the King, it was not produced for some months, its first exhibition being on the 6th of June. Unluckily, on Saturday the 13th, while it was performing for the sixth time, an account reached the theatre that the Duke of Monmouth had landed in the West;† which created such

* The musick of this Opera was published by Grabut in 1687, with a Dedication to James II.

† Dalrymple's MEMOIRS, vol. ii. Append. to Part I. p. 128.

consternation, that if tradition may be credited, the audience retired in confusion, and **ALBION AND ALBANIUS** was performed no more. The piece not having produced to the theatre half the money which had been expended in preparing it for re-

From a letter written by King James to the Prince of Orange, June 15, 1685, it appears, that though the Duke of Monmouth landed at Lyme, in Dorsetshire, on Thursday evening, June 11th, an account of his landing did not reach the King at Whitehall till *Saturday morning* the 13th. The House of Commons, having met on that day at the usual hour, between nine and ten o'clock, the news was soon afterwards communicated to them by a Message from the King, delivered by the Earl of Middleton (to whom Etherege afterwards wrote two poetical Epistles from Ratisbon).—Having voted and drawn up an Address to his Majesty, desiring him to take care of his royal person, they adjourned to *four o'clock*; in which interval they went to Whitehall, presented their address, and then met again. **COM. JOURN.** vol. ix. p. 735. About this time therefore, it may be presumed, the news transpired, and in an hour afterwards probably reached the Theatre, where an audience was assembled at the representation of the Opera of **ALBION AND ALBANIUS**; for plays at that time began at four o'clock. It seems from Mr. Luttrell's MS. note, that the first representation of this Opera was on Saturday the 6th of June; and Downes (**ROSC. ANGL.** p. 40.) says, that in consequence of Monmouth's invasion, it was only performed *six* times; so that the sixth representation was, without doubt, on Saturday, the 13th of June. An examination of dates is generally fatal to tales of this kind: here, however, they certainly support the tradition mentioned in the text.

presentation, it involved the Company in a considerable debt.⁴

We are now arrived at a memorable era in the life of Dryden ; for very soon after the accession of King James, he became a convert to popery. That his conversion was sincere, cannot be doubted ; for he appears to have bred all his children papists, and was uniform in his adherence to his new faith from this time to that of his death, when, as we shall hereafter see, he persevered in the profession of those tenets he now espoused. During the reign of King William, he well knew that his adherence to the religion of the abdicated monarch, instead of doing him any service, must operate as an unsurmountable obstacle to his deriving any emolument from the countenance and favour of the Government. I suspect, his wife, Lady Elizabeth, had long been a papist : her brother Charles, the second Earl of Berkshire, who succeeded to the title in 1669, and was probably godfather to our poet's eldest son, certainly was one.⁵

Dryden's attachment and services to the Duke of York during the latter years of his brother's reign, it might have been expected, would have been rewarded by him immediately on his ascending the throne, by the grant of some office which

⁴ ROSC. ANG. *ubi sup.*

⁵ Macpherson's STATE PAPERS, vol. i. p. 72.—He died in April, 1679, about ten years after his father.

would have rendered the remainder of his life easy and comfortable,—such as he had pointed out in his letter to Lord Rochester, who a few days after the King's Accession was a second time made Lord Treasurer: but James appears to have been no liberal patron;* for no mark of favour whatsoever was extended to the Laureate for near a year. At length, on the 4th of March, 1685-6, letters patent passed the great seal, granting him an additional pension of one hundred pounds a year, payable quarterly, the first payment to commence from the 25th of March preceding:⁶ which was the only favour he appears to have obtained from that monarch.

Soon after the death of his former master, he testified his respect for his memory by his *THRENODIA AUGUSTALIS*, a Pindarick Ode, or Elegy.

* Guthrie in his *ESSAY ON TRAGEDY* asserts, that he once gave Wycherley £. 1,500. and persuaded his brother "to settle a handsome annuity on him, for travelling abroad with the Duke of Monmouth."—But he is incorrect in both these points; for the person to whom Wycherley was to have been appointed *domestick governour* (about the year 1681) was the young Duke of Richmond; and the sum given by James II. to that poet, to pay his debts, was only £. 500.

⁶ Pat. 3 Jac. p. 4. n. 1. The consideration of this grant runs thus: "Know ye, that we, for and in consideration of the many good and acceptable services done by John Dryden, *Master of Arts*, to our late dearest brother King Charles the Second, as also to us done and performed, and taking notice of the learning and eminent abilities of the said J. D.", &c.

(as he afterwards called it,) not distinguished by any uncommon excellence from the numerous poetical performances which that event produced. The lines, describing the private character of Charles, are, however, appropriate and pleasing :

- " Be true, O Clio, to thy hero's name,
- " But draw him strictly so,
- " That all who view the piece, may know :
- " He needs no trappings of fictitious fame.
- " The load's too weighty ;—thou may'st choose
- " Some parts of praise, and some refuse :
- " Write, that his annals may be thought more lavish
than the Muse.
- " In scanty truth thou hast confined
- " The virtues of a noble mind,
- " Forgiving, bounteous, humble, just, and kind :
- " His conversation, wit, and parts,
- " His knowledge in the noblest useful arts,
- " Were such, dead authors could not give,
- " But habitudes with those who live ;
- " Who lighting him, did greater lights receive :
- " He drain'd from all, and all they knew,
- " His apprehension quick, his judgment true ;
- " That the most learn'd with shame confess
- " His knowledge more, his reading only less."

Of a very different description is the Ode to the pious memory of Mistress Anne Killegrew, which was published soon afterwards, and has been so highly praised by Dr. Johnson, who thought its first stanza superiour to any part of the admirable Ode on St. Cecilia's Day.

I do not recollect any other production of our author in this year, except a short paper of Verses,

which were prefixed to a book written by a friend, who had engaged on the same side with him in the political controversy that had for some years distracted the nation. Not having been noticed by the editors of his poems, they may, though of no extraordinary merit, not improperly be preserved here :

" To my Friend, Mr. J. NORTHLEIGH,

Author of THE PARALLEL ;

On his TRIUMPH OF THE BRITISH MONARCHY.

- " So Joseph, yet a youth, expounded well
- " The boding dream, and did th' event foretell ;
- " Judg'd by the past, and drew the Parallel.
- " Thus early Solomon the truth explored,
- " The right awarded, and the babe restored.
- " Thus Daniel, ere to prophecy he grew,
- " The perjured Presbyters did first subdue,
- " And freed Susanna from the canting crew.
- " Well may our Monarchy triumphant stand,
- " While warlike James protects both sea and land ;
- " And, under covert of his seven-fold shield,
- " Thou send'st thy shafts to scour the distant field.
- " By law thy powerful pen has set us free ;
- " Thou study'st that, and that may study thee. ' 1

The controversial writings which doubtless Dryden had studied, previous to his embracing popery,

¹ Prefixed to " The Triumph of our Monarchy over the Plots and Principles of our Rebels and Republicans, being Remarks on their most eminent Libels. By John Northleigh, LL.B., Author of THE PARALLEL," 8vo. 1685.

enabled him to undertake the defence of a paper written by Anne Hyde, Duchess of York, (who not long before her death, like him, avowed herself a Papist,) stating the motives which had induced her to change her religion: with this paper were published two others, found in the late King's strong-box, written, as was pretended, by his Majesty,⁸ to shew that there could be but one true church, which was that of Rome. To this royal publication, for these papers were issued out by the King's express command, Dr. Edward Stillingfleet published an Answer in 1686, and that produced a Defence of them, the whole of which has been erroneously ascribed to our author; for from his own words in the Preface to *RELIGIO LAICI*, it appears evident that he only wrote the Vindication of the Duchess of York,⁹ of which the style is

⁸ Bishop Burnet, speaking of these papers, says, "All that knew the King, when they read them, did without any sort of doubting conclude, that he never composed them; for he never read the Scriptures, nor laid things together, further than to turn them into a jest, or for some lively expression. These papers were probably writ either by Lord Bristol or by Lord Aubigny, who knew the secret of his religion, and gave him those papers as abstracts of some discourses they had with him on those heads, to keep him fixed to them."—Burnet supposes they prevailed with the King to copy them out with his own hand. *Hist. of his own Time*, vol. ii. p. 298.

⁹ See vol. ii. p. 475; and T. Brown's "*Reflections on THE HIND AND THE PANTHER*," 4to. 1687, p. 29.—
"I do hereby admonish you, Mr. Bayes, not to go on in your censures of this kind before you have re-

very different from the Defence of the tenets maintained by the royal controversialist.

Whether he had now any serious resolution of translating the newly published "History of Revolutions which have happened in Europe in matter of Religion," by Mons. Varillas, has hitherto been unascertained; for Burnet, in his Defence of his Reflections on the ninth book of the first volume of Mons. Varillas's HISTORY OF HERESIES, &c. only says, he had been informed from England that Dryden was engaged in such a work, but had discontinued it, finding the credit of his author was overturned. The Stationers' Register, however, shews that Burnet's information was correct; for on the 29th of April, 1686, Jacob Tonsen made an entry relative to this work, which is there said to have been translated by our author, by the King's command: but the translation was never published. Why it was relinquished, is minutely accounted for by Burnet, who conceived that he had been the cause of its being laid aside. By an imperfect citation of that writer's words made by Dr. Birch in the General Dictionary, and Burnet's very clumsy and lax phraseology, Dr. Johnson was led to suppose that Dryden, beside the translation of Varillas, had written an ANSWER to Burnet's REFLECTIONS on that author; but on an examination of his DEFENCE of the REFLEC-

plied to the learned and ingenious Answerer of your pamphlet, which you wrote in prose, in the case of the Duchess of Y."

TIONS it will be found, that the ANSWER to which he alludes is that published at Paris by Varillas himself. This will at once appear sufficiently clear, by prefixing to the extract given by Birch and Johnson, the preceding sentence :

" It will perhaps be a little longer a digesting to Mons. Varillas, than it was a preparing to me. One proof will quickly appear, whether the world is so satisfied with *his* ANSWER,' as upon that to return to any thoughts of his History; for I have been informed from England, that a Gentleman who is known both for poetry and other things, had spent three months in translating M. Varillas's History; but that, as soon as my Reflections appeared, he discontinued his labour, finding the credit of his author was gone. Now, if he thinks it is recovered by his Answer, he will perhaps go on with his translation; and this may be, for aught I know, as good an entertainment for him as the conversation that he had set on between the Hinds and Panthers, and all

' So also in The Defence of the Reflections, 1687, p. 19: " I confess, when I heard that Mons. Varillas was writing an ANSWER to my REFLECTIONS, I could not imagine where he would attack me. . . . I fancied he might have some Letters of the time; . . . but I was surprised when I read his ANSWER, and saw that instead of all these authorities of which he boasted, that the only two authors that he cites are Florimond de Raymond and himself."

The Bishop therefore meant to say—" Now, if he [Dryden] thinks it is recovered by his [Varillas's] ANSWER, he [Dryden] will perhaps go on," &c.

the rest of animals, for whom M. Varillas may serve well enough for an author : and this history and that poem are such extraordinary things of their kind, that it will be but suitable to see the author of the worst poem, become likewise the translator of the worst history, that the age has produced. If his grace and his wit improve both proportionably, he will hardly find that he has gained much by the change he has made, from having no religion to choose one of the worst. It is true, he had something to sink from, in matter of wit ; but as for his morals, it is scarce possible for him to grow a worse man than he was. He has lately wreaked his malice on me for spoiling his three months' labour ; but in it he has done me all the honour that any man can receive from him, which is to be railed at by him. If I had ill-nature enough to prompt me to wish a very bad wish for him, it should be, that he would go on and finish his translation. By that it will appear, whether the English nation, which is the most competent judge in this matter, has, upon the seeing our debate, pronounced in M. Varillas's favour or in mine. It is true, Mr. D. will suffer a little by it ; but at least it will serve to keep him in from other extravagancies ; and if he gains little honour by this work, yet he cannot lose so much by it, as he has done by his last employment."

The very severe character of Burnet, alluded to in the foregoing passage, which appeared in the middle of the year 1687, in *THE HIND AND THE PAN-*

THER, was unquestionably remembered by the Bishop, when in writing his "History of his own Time," many years afterwards, he censured our author for impurity, in a contested passage which we shall hereafter have occasion to consider.

THE HIND AND THE PANTHER, the longest original poem that our author ever wrote, consisting of near two thousand lines, was the employment of part of the year 1686 and 1687; for from an entry in the Stationers' Books, it should seem to have been ready for the press in January, 1686-7.^a It was not, however, published till the following April. That at such a time, when an avowed Papist sat on the English throne, and the whole nation was stunned with controversy, such a poem should have been much read, and have very speedily gone through three, if not four, editions, is by no means surprising. The ridicule to which a dialogue between two beasts, on some of the most disputed points of theology, was subject, produced in the same year "THE HIND AND THE PANTHER transversed to the story of the Country Mouse and the City Mouse;" a composition partly in prose, and partly in verse, which has always been ascribed to Charles Montague, afterwards Earl of Halifax, then in his twenty-sixth year, and Prior, who

^a In the last leaf of that volume of the Stationers' Registers which begins with 29 January, 1682-3, is the following entry:

"Jan. 12. 1686, [i. e. 1686-7.] M^d. That Mr. Jacob Tonson enters this Caveat—that noe person enter the poem called the Hind and y^e Panther. W^{itn}. J. T."

was but three-and-twenty, and yet a student at St. John's College, Cambridge : but the share of Montague was so small, at least in the opinion of a contemporary peer, Charles, Earl of Peterborough, that being asked by Mr. Spence, whether Halifax did not write the COUNTRY MOUSE in conjunction with Prior, he replied, " Yes ; as if I were in a chaise with Mr. Cheselden here, drawn by his fine horse, and should say, *Lord, how finely we draw this chaise !*"—One of Curll's authors, however, I know not on what authority, asserts that Lord Halifax wrote the whole of the Preface.

Dryden appears to have been much affected by this piece, though Dr. Johnson, in his Life of Prior, doubts that fact, perhaps without sufficient reason. " There is a story (says he,) of great pain suffered, and of tears shed on this occasion, by Dryden, who thought it hard *that an old man should be so treated by those to whom he had always been civil*. By tales like these is the envy raised by superiour abilities every day gratified : when they are attacked, every one hopes to see them humbled : what is hoped is readily believed, and what is believed is confidently told. Dryden had been more accustomed to hostilities, than that such enemies should break his quiet ; and if we can suppose him vexed, we can hardly deny him sense to conceal his uneasiness."—These reflections certainly are most just ; and without doubt Dryden in general took care not to discover whatever un-

easiness his adversaries might give him : but still in an hour of frankness, conversing with a friend, he might have expressed himself wounded, not by their wit, but by their ingratitude. This is not a traditional tale handed down from one careless and inaccurate relater to another, but stands on the authority of Dr. Lockier, who related it to Mr. Spence *from his own knowledge* ; for his words were, —“ Dryden was most touched with **THE HIND AND THE PANTHER TRANSVERSED**. *I have heard him say,* —‘ for two young fellows that I have always been very civil to, to use an old man in so cruel a manner !’—and he wept as he said it.”^a—The word *wept* is, however, certainly too strong. The most that we can suppose is, that he mentioned their conduct towards him with some degree of emotion.

An opportunity of this kind was not likely to be neglected by such a professed occasional pamphleteer as Tom Brown, as he was always familiarly called by his contemporaries. Accordingly, about the same time that Prior and Montague made their attack, to four very dull letters written by Martin Clifford several years before, on our author's **CONQUEST OF GRANADA** and some other plays, but not published till this time, Brown subjoined **REFLECTIONS ON THE HIND AND THE PANTHER** ; of which a perfect judgment may be made from the following sentences, which form the conclusion of this piece :

^a Spence's ANECDOTES.

“ Yet, let me tell you, Mr. Bayes, your best friends declare you a more competent judge of some sort of wit and delight, than of religion, or any controversie about it ; they say, you manage rhythmes well ; and that you have a good art in making high ideas of honour, and in speaking noble things : in this debate, it had been more edifying if you had wrote in prose ; it would have rendered your speech more natural, and you would never have made so much contention, as you have done, between the rythme and the sense. But I see, he is not in a condition of taking counsel, or of correcting his vices ; therefore he will continue in defiance of all the means that can be used to the contrary, *an endless Scribler, an empty Politician, an insolent Poet, and an idle pretender to Controversie* ; so that he is resolved to rave against us as so many vile Hereticks ; just as the Italians, French, and Spaniards, have had the vanity to boast, that all wit is to be sought for, no where, but amongst themselves : it is their established rule, that good sense has always kept near the warm sun, and scarce ever yet dared to come farther than the forty-ninth degree northward. This is a very unaccountable fancy ; but they have the same opinion of religion too ; as if all orthodoxy could not go out of the bounds which they have set it.

“ So Mr. Bayes his controversial writings are *unanswerable*, just as some places are *impregnable*, by reason of the *dirt* that lies about them ; and to maintain a conflict any longer with his reasons, were to renew the old way of fighting with sand-

bags, the true emblem of his unjointed, incoherent stuff; for if he goes on thus in making volumes of controversie, his best confuters will be the grocers and haberdashers of small wares, who will bind up their rotten raisins and mundungus in his papers; and his booksellers will dwell at the south side of Paul's, where his works shall be bound up, as his *forefather* William Prynnes were, in trunks, hat-cases, and band-boxes."

During the latter years of King James and the beginning of the reign of King William, if we were to form our opinion from the pieces which Dryden gave the publick, we should be led to suppose, that for some time his literary exertions were less vigorous and constant than they had been at a preceding period; but he probably was equally diligent and studious as before; though for some time after the Revolution, which made a great change in his situation, he might not hazard any publication, from an apprehension that the unpopularity of his tenets might extend itself to his works. At this time, therefore, though we do not find the press teeming with his labours, I imagine his hours of leisure were employed in composing several of those pieces which were produced when time had a little softened the asperity of his triumphant censurers and opponents.

In 1687, in addition to the poem last-mentioned, he produced his first Ode on St. Cecilia's day; and in some months afterwards prepared for the happy series of years which he flattered himself were to run in long procession from the time a son

should be born to fill the English throne; on which event he produced his *BRITANNIA REDIVIVA*, June 23, 1688, in less than a fortnight after the birth of the Prince, long known by the title of the *PRETENDER*. In the same or preceding year, probably, he addressed to his friend Sir George Etherege, an Epistle, in short familiar verse, on his being appointed Envoy to Ratisbon; ⁵ which is of a different structure from all his other compositions, and confirms an observation made by Congreve, that there is scarcely any species of poetry in which he did not excel.

The reputation of Milton now daily increasing, our author's bookseller, Jacob Tonson, was encouraged by Mr. Somers, at that time only a barrister, to print a new and elegant edition of *PARADISE LOST*, in folio, of which three large impressions had already been dispersed in a less splendid form. By the encouragement and zeal of Somers, and the other admirers of that great poet, aided by the activity of Atterbury, who was then a Student of Christ-Church, in Oxford, and appears to have exerted himself much in promoting the scheme in that University, ⁶ above five hundred subscribers

⁵ Sir George Etherege was appointed Envoy to Ratisbon in or before 1687, and died abroad about the year 1694.

⁶ Mr. Richardson ("Explanatory Notes and Remarks on *PAR. LOST*," p. cxviii.) contends, that Mr. Somers was not the principal promoter of this edition; and Dr. Warton says, (*Pope's Works*, vol. viii. p. 121. n.) that "Atterbury, and not Lord Somers, had the great merit of

were obtained, and the book was published in 1688. Dryden on this occasion was a subscriber,

procuring Milton's poem to be printed by subscription." But surely the testimony of Jacob Tonson, for whom the book was printed, may be relied on; and he expressly says in a Dedication of a subsequent edition to Lord Somers, that this nobleman's "opinion and encouragement occasioned the first appearance of *PARADISE LOST* in the folio edition." Atterbury, certainly, by his zeal and activity procured many subscriptions at Oxford (where he at that time resided); as appears from the following unpublished Letter written by him to Tonson:

MR. TONSON,

"Mr. Crecch assur'd me on Saturday, that y^e last Cutt was not graven, and therefore I thought I might stay a post longer then y^e time you fix'd. This I chose the rather to do, because having been in y^e country some time, I have not had lately y^e opportunity of remembring some people of their promises to subscribe. The truth is, severall people put in their names, who did not immediately deposit their money; so that I was willing, before I sent you any thing, to make y^e subscribers and my account even. I have received above 5 pounds in crowns, and y^e rest I shall have when I meet with y^e men; so that you may securely return y^e whole number of books to me, and I'll take care to have 'em convey'd, and y^e you shall have y^e full summ. The thinness of y^e University, particularly our house, and y^e expectations people are in of greater affairs, have been y^e cause that this thing has not gone forward, so well as it would have done at another time, especially if you had gone on immediately with it upon the first proposal: all people were then strangely fond of it. You talk'd a good while ago of paying in subscription money to *Barghers*: if your mind be y^e same still, I'll pay him in 6 pounds upon a words

and furnished Tonson with the well-known hex-

notice. Before you write to me agen, pray do me the kindness to speak to Mr. Momford [Mountford] for a copy of the Oxford Prologue, which I have promised a Gentleman, but have here and there forgott a verse. I wrote to him according to your directions, but can hear nothing from him. Along with that I suppose you will send Dryden's Satyr; which, upon my word, shall be returned without a line transcrib'd. If you have any thing that's bold on your side of y^e world, y^e coach is a safe way of conveyance. My Whole Duty of Man waits for yours; and if you think it worth your while to have the 1st Miscellany [and] y^e piece of Spencers in 4to. (which you know I ow you) sent you up along with it, it shall be done.

" I am your servant to command,

" FR. ATTERBURY.

" Creech preechd a bold sermon here on Gunpowder-Treason day.

" Oxon, X^t Church, Nov. 15, 1687.

Vincent Corbet.

Dr. Bernard.

Dr. Harsnet.

Dr. Gibbons.

Mr. Bennet.

Mr. Richard Old.

Mr. Harding.

Mr. Sykes.

Mr. Tho. Newy.

Mr. Fra. Hicman.

Mr. Rich. Chapman.

Mr. Cornelius Norwood.

Mr. Lancelot Lake.

Mr. Thistlethwait.

Mr. Rasbury.

Mr. Dickson.

Mr. Rich. Atkins.

Mr. Rich. Backwell.

Mr. Leigh Backwell.

Dr. Woodard.

Mr. Owen Norton.

Mr. Rogers.

Dr. Lewis Atterbury.

Mr. Sampson Estwick.

Mr. George Smalridge.

Dr. William Beach.

Mr. Codrington.

Mr. William Whitfield.

Mr. John Whitfield.

Mr. Cowcher.

Atterbury.

astick, which has ever since generally accompanied the engraved portraits of Milton. These lines were perhaps suggested by the distich written by Selvaggi in honour of the youthful poet, while he was at Rome, which Dryden has very happily amplified :

" Græcia Maronidem, jactet sibi Roma Maronem,
" Anglia Miltonum jactat utrique patrem."

In whatever visions of future favour or emolument our author might have indulged, when he congratulated his Sovereign and the nation on the birth of a prince, he was awakened from these dreams by the Revolution ; which deprived him, in August, 1689, of his offices of Poet Laureate and Historiographer, and consequently of three hundred pounds a year. To add to his mortification, the laurel, and the Historiographer's place, were given to Shadwell ;¹ who had been at variance with

" The rest of the Christen names I can't think of."

All the foregoing names are found in the printed List of Subscribers to the first folio edition of Milton's PARADISE Lost : this letter, therefore, must have related to that work.

¹ Pat. 1 Will. and Mar. p. 3. n. 16.—By this patent the same salary was granted to Shadwell, which Dryden had enjoyed during the reign of James II. ; viz. 300l. a year.

As in a former page I have given an account of those persons who *may be considered* as executing the office of Poet Laureate, before our author, (for I do not say that they were thus appointed,) I here add a List of Dryden's successors in this office. On the 29th of August, 1689, he

him for ten years, and had long been in the habit of defaming his character by the most scandalous and injurious libels. The Earl of Dorset, who was appointed Lord Chamberlain of the Household the day after the accession of King William, had too much good nature, and too high a respect for Dryden's talents, not to wish that he should hold his station; but probably found the new King so ill disposed towards him, in consequence of his attachment to the abdicated Monarch, as to render it indecent, were it even in his power, to permit him to retain an employment so nearly connected

was succeeded in both his employments by Shadwell. To Shadwell, Nahum Tate succeeded in the office of Laureate, December 23, 1692, with an annual pension of £.100. only, and a butt of Canary wine; (Pat. 4 Will. and Mar. p. 8. n. 14.) the Historiographer's place being given to Thomas Rymer. On the death of Tate, in 1716, the laurel was given to Rowe; who dying in December 1718, the Rev. Laurence Eusden was in the following year invested with this office. On the death of Eusden, Sept. 27, 1790, Colley Cibber was appointed Poet Laureate. His reign extended to the end of the year 1757. To him succeeded Mr. Wm. Whitehead; who dying April 14, 1785, the Rev. Thomas Warton obtained the laurel, which he held for five years. Shortly after his death, which happened May 21, 1790, Henry James Pye, Esq. was appointed Poet Laureate, and now fills the poetical throne.

There is no grant in the Chapel of the Rolls, constituting Rowe Poet Laureate. The practice of conferring this office by a warrant signed and sealed by the Lord Chamberlain, nominating *A. B.* to the office, with the accustomed fees thereunto belonging, then commenced, and has continued from that time to the present.

with royalty. He had, however, no such power ; for Dryden's conversion to popery was an insurmountable objection to his holding his offices.* Shadwell, doubtless, was selected to fill these places, not for his poetical merits, nor historical knowledge, but solely for his former exertions as a Whig.*

* By stat. 1 W. and M. c. 8. every person holding any office, was obliged to take the oaths of allegiance, supremacy, and abjuration, before the 1st of August, 1689; otherwise his office to be void.—Three letters addressed by Dryden to his friend and patron, Charles, Earl of Dorset, which are among that nobleman's papers at Knole, would perhaps throw some light on this transaction ; but though they may be materially connected with the history of the life of this great poet, I am not able to gratify my readers by their perusal.—They will, however, I have reason to believe, at some future period be given to the publick, in a miscellaneous collection of the Dorset Papers.

* Shadwell had smoothed the way to his advancement by publishing " A Congratulatory Poem on his Highness the Prince of Orange his coming into England : Written by T. S., a true Lover of his Country ;" (price 3d.) and on the 20th of February, 1688-9, he published " A Congratulatory Poem to the most illustrious Queen Mary, upon her arrival in England ;" of which the following lines are as good as any other four in this performance :

" We from the Mighty States have now gain'd more
 " Than by our aid they ever got before ; . . .
 " Not Alva's rage would have distress'd them so,
 " As, *Madam*, we have done, recalling you."

Rymer, who on Shadwell's death obtained the Historiographer's place, was still more alert ; for on the 15th of

Though no legal disability had intervened, it may be supposed, that Lord Dorset might have been induced to devest Dryden of the laurel, because the duty of his office would necessarily demand the warmest encomiums of the new King; and that whatever other inconveniences this deprivation may have brought with it, it yet must have been attended with one circumstance, by which indolence would be gratified; that of relieving him from the difficult task of writing annually on the same theme. But the truth is, Dryden experienced no relief of this kind; for, though both the birthday of the Prince on the throne, and the commencement of the year, seem to have been regularly celebrated by vocal and instrumental musick, in the last age, as in the present, ' and some poems composed on those

February, three days only after the Queen's landing at Whitehall, he issued out " A Poem on the arrival of Queen Mary, February 12th, 1688-9."

Of these productions the only copies that I have seen, are in Mr. Bindley's collection.

' Thus, in a folio volume of manuscript Compositions by Henry Purcell, in his own hand-writing, in his Majesty's Collection, we find, " A Welcome Song in the year 1681, for the King;" beginning with the words—*Swifter, lfs, swifter flow*. " A Welcome Song for his Majesty at his return from Newmarket, October 21, 1682;"—*The summer's absence unconcern'd we bear*. " The Welcome Song performed to his Majesty in the year 1683; symphonies and five verses;"—*Fly, bold rebellion, &c.* " The Welcome Song performed to his Majesty in the year 1684;"—*From those serene and rapturous joys*. " Welcome Song,

occasions are yet extant, to produce an Ode or any other poetical composition on either of those subjects, does not appear to have been any part of the duty of the Laureate in our author's time; nor have we among his works a single performance of this kind. Soon after he was deprived of the laurel, the custom of annually celebrating these events in *official* verse, seems to have commenced,^b

1685, being the first song performed to King James II." —*Why are all the Muses mute?* "Welcome Song, 1687;" *Sound the trumpet, beat the drum.* "Welcome Song, 1688;" —*Ye tuneful Muses, raise your heads.* "Birthday Ode for King William:

*How does the glorious day appear,
The mightiest day in all the year."*

See Burney's *HIST. OF MUSICK*, vol. iii. p. 504. All these *Welcome Songs*, except one, were, I suppose, Odes performed in honour of the reigning King's birthday. So, in the second volume of Dryden's *MISCELLANIES*, 8vo. 1685, (when our author wore the laurel,) p. 449, we find, "The Ode sung before the King on New-Year's Day," by an anonymous poet.

^b Yet, after the laurel was given to Shadwell, Sir Charles Sidley furnished "An Anniversary Ode, sung before her Majesty, the 29th of April [1692]: set by Mr. Henry Purcell." *GENT. JOURN.* for May, 1692, p. 2. We have also an Ode by him on K. William's birthday. On the 1st of Jan. 1692-3, Tate, as Poet Laureate, produced an Ode; another on the Queen's birthday, April 29th, 1693; and a third on the King's birthday, performed before their Majesties, November 4, 1693: but the custom of requiring these compositions from the Laureate was not then perfectly established; for the Ode performed before their Majesties on the New-Year's Day, 1693-4, was

and the production of such lyric strains has since been considered a regular and important part of the duty of this office : a task, the weight of

written by Motteux (see GENT. JOURN. for January and February, 1693-4); and one for the same occasion was written by Prior. It appears in his works, 8vo. 1709, p. 39, under the title of—"Hymn to the Sun : set by Dr. Purcell, and sung before their Majesties on New-Year's Day, 1693-4." (Purcell, however, was never honoured with the degree of Doctor in Musick.) Tonson, in the fourth edition of Dryden's Miscellanies, says, it was written at the Hague, and intended to be sung, &c. Motteux expressly says, his Ode was sung. I know not how to reconcile these three discordant accounts. The King's birthday, however, in the succeeding November, was officially celebrated by Tate. See GENT. JOURN. for October and November, 1694. This Ode of Tate's was set by Dr. Staggins; of whom some account will be given hereafter.—Whether the admired Duet in a birthday Ode, beginning—"Let Cæsar and Urania live," which was set by Purcell, and sung in the reign of King William and Queen Mary, was written by Tate, or whether during the remainder of that reign or the next he was assisted by any volunteer, I have no means of ascertaining. In 1707, Fenton published, in folio, "An Ode to the Sun, for the New Year;" but from its great length it could not have been sung at Court. Rowe, as Laureate, wrote an Ode for the New Year, 1716; another for 1717; an Ode to Peace, sung on New-Year's Day, 1718; and Birthday Odes for 1716 and 1718. His death having happened on the 6th of December in that year, the Ode for the New-Year, 1718-19, was furnished by George Jeffreys, Esq. From that time, probably, the Laureate produced two poetical compositions every year, though they have not always been preserved.

which one of the most ingenious of his successors in the poetical throne seems to have felt by anticipation ; having, before he was invested with the office, endeavoured to shew the propriety of abolishing a custom, which he thought would be more honoured in the breach than the observance.¹ Happily, however, a suggestion which would have deprived us of the most elegant compositions of this kind produced since the Revolution, not having been attended to, the united powers of melody and song are still annually employed on these topicks.

We are now arrived at the fourth period of our author's dramattick life. Being by the Revolution deprived of a considerable part of his income, he was once more constrained to derive some emolument from the stage, and in 1690 produced the tragedy of *DON SEBASTIAN*, which was acted with

¹ " It is to be wished, (says Mr. Warton,) that another change might at least be suffered to take place in the execution of this institution, which is confessedly Gothick, and unaccommodated to modern manners : I mean, that the more than annual return of a composition on a trite argument would be no longer required. I am conscious I say this at a time, when the best of Kings affords the most just and copious theme for panegyrick ; but I speak it at a time, when the department is honourably filled by a poet of taste and genius, which are idly wasted on the most splendid subjects, when imposed by constraint, and perpetually repeated." *HIST. OF ENG. POET.* vol. ii, p. 198. 4to. 1778.

great applause. In the same year his comedy, entitled *AMPHITRYON*, was not less successful.

The opera of *KING ARTHUR* appears to have been written before the death of Charles the Second, though it was not performed till 1691, when by its own merit, and the aid of Purcell's musick, who was then greatly admired, it became a very popular entertainment.⁸ In the summer of the same year the tragedy of *CLEOMENES* was written; but Dryden being prevented by illness from finishing it, consigned it to the care of his friend Southerne, by whose aid it was completed,⁹ so as

⁸ "It was (says Downes) excellently adorned with scenes and machines; the musical part set by the famous Mr. Henry Purcell, and dances made by Mr. Jo. Priest. The play and musick pleased the court and city; and being well performed, 'twas very gainful to the company." *ROSC. ANGL.* p. 12.

Dr. Johnson's account of *KING ARTHUR* is incorrect; for he supposed, at first, that it had *never* been performed. In the third edition of his *LIVES OF THE POETS*, he inadvertently added a new paragraph to his account of this opera; in which he observed, that, in consequence of the alarm caused by the Duke of Monmouth's invasion, it was performed *but once*: but this paragraph was evidently intended to be annexed to the account of the Opera of *ALBION* and *ALBANIUS*; though, in truth, that piece was not so hastily dismissed from the scene. See p. 187. n. 3.

⁹ This circumstance we learn from the following passage in Southerne's Dedication of *THE WIVES EXCUSE, OR CUCKOLDS MAKE THEMSELVES*, to the Right Ho-

to be acted, after some obstructions on political grounds,' in May, 1692; and about December,

nourable Thomas Wharton; which comedy was performed and published in 1692:

"These, Sir, are capital objections against me; but they hit very few faults, nor have they mortified me into a despair of pleasing the more reasonable part of mankind. If Mr. Dryden's judgment goes for any thing, I have it on my side; for, speaking of this play, he has publicly said, "the town was kind to SIR ANTHONY LOVE, I needed them only to be just to this;" and to prove there was more than friendship in his opinion, upon the credit of this play with him, falling sick last summer, he bequeathed to my care the last act of his tragedy of CLEOMENES, which, when it comes into the world, you will find to be so considerable a trust, that all the town will pardon me for defending this play, that preferred me to it. If modesty be sometimes a weakness, what I say can hardly be a crime: in a fair English trial both parties are allowed to be heard; and, without this vanity of mentioning Mr. Dryden, I had lost the best evidence of my cause."

' In the GENTLEMAN'S JOURNAL for April 1692, by Peter Motteux, I find the following paragraph relative to this piece:

"I was in hopes to have given you in this Letter an account of the acting of Dryden's CLEOMENES: it was to have appeared upon the stage on Saturday last, and you need not doubt but that the town was big with the expectation of the performance; but orders came from her Majesty to hinder its being acted; so that none can tell when it shall be played."

"I told you in my last, (says the same writer in the following month,) that none could tell when Mr. Dryden's

1693, his theatrick labours were concluded by the production of his last drama, **LOVE TRIUMPHANT**,

CLEOMENES would appear. Since that time, the innocence and merit of the play have raised it several eminent advocates, who have prevailed to have it acted; and you need not doubt but it has been with great applause."

The noblemen who befriended our author on this occasion, by representing **CLEOMENES** as "wholly innocent of those crimes which were laid unjustly to its charge," were Antony, Viscount Falkland, and Laurence, Earl of Rochester. What were the grounds of offence, does not appear. But the Queen, from whom the prohibition came, (the King being at that time in Holland,) was probably extremely fearful of any piece being introduced on the stage, that might admit of a political application to her own time, in consequence of the distress she had suffered a few years before at the representation of **THE SPANISH FRIAR**, which she ordered to be performed in June, 1689, it being the first play she went to see. Of her confusion and distress on that occasion a particular account is given in the following curious letter, written by Daniel Finch, second Earl of Nottingham, which seems to have been formerly in the possession of Oldys, and has been printed by Sir John Dalrymple, from a copy furnished by Dr. Percy, Lord Bishop of Dromore. It does not appear to whom the letter was addressed:

"I am loth to send blank paper by a carrier, but am rather willing to send some of the tattle of the town, than nothing at all; which will at least serve for an hour's chat,—and then convert the scrawl to its proper use.

"The only day her Majesty gave herself the diversion of a play, and that on which she designed to see another, has furnished the town with discourse for near a month.

a tragicomedy ; which was announced some time before as a drama of the same kind with *THE*

The choice of the play was *THE SPANISH FRIAR*, the only play forbid by the late K[ing]. Some unhappy expressions, among which those that follow, put her in some disorder, and forced her to hold up her fan, and often look behind her, and call for her palatine and hood, and any thing she could next think of ; while those who were in the pit before her turned their heads over their shoulders, and all in general directed their looks towards her, whenever their fancy led them to make any application of what was said. In one place, where the Queen of Arragon is going to church in procession, 'tis said by a spectator, ' Very good ; she usurps the throne, keeps the old King in prison, and at the same time is praying for a blessing on her army ;'—And when said, ' That 'tis observed at Court, who weeps, and who wears black for good King Sancho's death,' 'tis said, ' Who is that, that can flatter a Court like this ? Can I sooth tyranny ? seem pleas'd to see my Royal Master murdered ; his crown usurped ; a distaff in the throne ?'—And ' What title has this Queen, but lawless force ; and force must pull her down.'—Twenty more things are said, which may be wrested to what they were never designed : but however, the observations then made furnished the town with talk, till something else happened, which gave it much occasion for discourse ; for another play being ordered to be acted, the Queen came not, being taken up with other diversion. She dined with Mrs. Gradens, the famous woman in the Hall, that sells fine laces and head-dresses ; from thence she went to the Jew's, that sells Indian things ; to Mrs. Ferguson's, De Vett's, Mrs. Harrison's, and other Indian houses ; but not to Mrs. Potter's, though in her way ; which caused Mrs. Potter to say, that she might

SPANISH FRIAR;* but did not meet with the success of that piece, for according to the testimony

as well have hoped for that honour as others, considering that the whole design of bringing the Queen and King was managed at her house, and the consultations held there; so that she might as well have thrown away a little money in raffling there, as well as at the other houses: but it seems that my Lord Devonshire has got Mrs. Potter to be laundress: she has not much countenance of the Queen, her daughter still keeping the Indian house her mother had. The same day the Queen went to one Mrs. Wise's, a famous woman for telling fortunes, but could not prevail with her to tell any thing; though to others she has been very true, and has foretold that King James shall come in again, and the Duke of Norfolk shall lose his head: the last, I suppose, will naturally be the consequence of the first. These things, however innocent, have passed the censure of the town: and, besides a private reprimand given, the King gave one *in publick*; saying to the Queen, that he heard she dined at a bawdy-house, and desired the next time she went, he might go. She said, she had done nothing but what the late Queen had done. He asked her, if she meant to make her, her example. More was said on this occasion than ever was known before; but it was borne with all the submission of a good wife, who leaves all to the direction of the K—, and divers herself with walking six or seven miles a day, and looking after her buildings, making of fringes, and such like innocent things; and does not meddle in government, though she has better title to do it than the late Queen had."

Though the latter part of this letter does not immediately relate to the subject before us, it contains so curious a picture of the manners of the time, that I have

of a contemporary, "it was damned by the universal cry of the town."

been tempted to transcribe it.—To understand that passage, where it is said, that those who were in the pit *before the Queen, turned their heads over their shoulders*, to observe her countenance, it should be kept in mind, that in the last age, and during the earlier part of the present century, the Royal Family, when they honoured the theatre with their presence, sat in the centre front-box; which long retained the name of the King's box. In foreign countries that has always been the place appropriated to the Sovereign; and in such a situation certainly the royal visitants are best seen by the audience, and may themselves most commodiously see the representations of the stage.

¹ GENT. JOURN. for 1693, p. 374.

² In a Letter from a Gentleman in London to a friend in the country, March 22, 1693-4, (which is printed at length in THE PLAYS AND POEMS OF SHAKSPEARE, 8vo. 1790, vol. i. part ii. p. 141,) the writer, who appears to have had so little perception of our author's excellence, that he can afford him no other epithets than "*huffing Dryden*," and "*the conceited poet*," thus contemptuously speaks of this piece:

"The ad play [produced in the season of 1693] is Mr. Dryden's, called LOVE TRIUMPHANT, OR NATURE WILL PREVAIL. It is a tragi-comedy, but in my opinion, one of the worst he ever writt, if not the very worst: the comical part descends beneath the style and shew of a Bartholomew-fair Droll. It was damned by the universal cry of the town, *nemine contradicente*, but the conceited poet. He says in his Preface, that this is the last the town must expect from him: he had done himself a kindness, had he taken his leave before."

In a former page it has been mentioned, that Dryden himself prefixed to KING ARTHUR a list of his plays, arranged in the order in which he wrote them. (See p. 56, n. 1.) To that list, which I have reserved for this place, I have annexed the dates of the entries of the greater part of them, extracted from the Stationers' Register; the time when they were published; and the theatre at which they were acted.

P L A Y S.			Acted by	Entered at Stationers' Hall.	Published in
1. THE WILD GALLANT. C.	{	{	The King's Servants.	Aug. 7, 1667.	1669.
2. THE RIVAL LADIES. T. C.			K. S.	June 27, 1664.	1664.
3. THE INDIAN EMPEROR. T.			K. S.	May 26, 1665.	1667.
4. SECRET LOVE, OR THE MAIDEN QUEEN. C.	{	{	K. S.	Aug. 7, 1667.	1668.
5. SIR MARTIN MARALL. C.			The Duke of York's Servants.	June 24, 1668.	1668.
6. THE TEMPEST. C.			D. S.	Jan. 8, 1669-70.	1670.
7. AN EVENING'S LOVE, OR THE MOCK ASTROLOGER, C.	{	{	K. S.	Nov. 20, 1668.	1671.
8. TYRANNICK LOVE, OR THE ROYAL MARTYR. T.			K. S.	July 14, 1669.	Q. also 1668.
9. } THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA, Two Parts. T.			K. S.	Feb. 20, 1670-1.	1670.
10. }					1672.

P L A Y S.	Acted by	Entered at Stationers' Hall.	Published in
11. MARRIAGE A-LA-MODE. C.	K. S.	Mar. 18, 1672-3.	1673.
12. THE ASSIGNATION, OR LOVE IN A NUNNERY. C.	K. S.	Mar. 18, 1672-3.	1673.
13. AMBOYNA. T.	K. S.	June 26, 1673.	1673.
14. THE STATE OF INNOCENCE O.	K. S.	April 17, 1674.	1674.
15. AURENG-ZEBE. T.	K. S.	Nov. 29, 1675.	1676.
16. ALL FOR LOVE. T.	K. S.	Jan. 31, 1677-8.	1678.
17. THE KIND KEEPER, OR MR. LIMBERHAM. C.	D. S.	.....	1678.
18. OEDIPUS. T.	D. S.	.....	1679.
19. TROILUS AND CRESSIDA. T.	D. S.	April 14, 1679.	1679.
20. THE SPANISH FRIAR. T. C.	D. S.	.....	1681.
21. THE DUKE OF GUISE. T.	The United Companies.	.....	1683.
22. ALBION AND ALBANIUS. O.		.....	1683.
23. DON SEBASTIAN. T.	U. C.	.....	1690.
24. AMPHITRYON. C.	U. C.	.....	1690.
25. KING ARTHUR. O.	U. C.	.....	1691.
26. CLEOMENES. T.	U. C.	.....	1692.
27. LOVE TRIUMPHANT. T. C.	U. C.	.....	1694.

The state of Dryden's finances now requiring all the aid which his literary exertions could supply, we find him, during the last ten years of his life, constantly and laboriously employed. Early in 1690, if not before, he appears to have finished a version of the first, sixth, and tenth Satires of Juvenal, and to have intended a separate publication of those pieces ;⁴ but on further consideration he enlarged his scheme, and calling in the aid of his two elder sons and some of the contemporary

⁴ On the 9th of February, 1690-91, Jacob Tonson entered in the Stationers' Register—"The 1st, y^e 6th, and the 10th Satyr of Juvenal, translated from the Lattin into English Verse by Mr. John Dryden. Lycensed by Robert Midgley."

In THE GENTLEMAN'S JOURNAL for Feb. 1691-2, Motteux announced that "Juvenal and Persius, Englished by several hands, will be printed in a short time, Mr. Dryden having done *four* Satyr of the first, and *two* of the last : you need not doubt, since he hath so great a share in the undertaking, but the rest will be well done."

Dryden afterwards resolved to translate the whole of Persius, as the same writer, who lived on friendly terms with him, informs us in the following paragraph :

"Persius is an unhappy gentleman, who hath been for a long time under a cloud ; I do not mean as the rest of his brethren, the poets, are under a cloud ; I speak of the obscurity of his expression : but since our Apollo, for so my Lord Roscommon calls Mr. Dryden, hath undertaken to translate him, 'tis hoped he will dissipate the cloud, and illustrate those beauties which were darkened by his gloomy diction ; for many of the learned are of opinion, that Persius strove to secure himself under the mists of

poets, resolved to give a complete translation both of that author and Persius; to which he contributed, in addition to the Satires already mentioned, the Third and the Sixteenth, and the entire version of Persius; prefixing a very ample Discourse on Satire, addressed to Charles, Earl of Dorset. This work was given to the publick in September, 1692. In 1691, his friendship for Walsh, whom, in the Postscript to his translation of Virgil, he denominates "the best critick in our nation," prompted him to write a short preface to that author's *DIALOGUE ON WOMEN*; and in the following February, 1691-2, he was induced, probably by the promise of a reward, to compose an Elegy on the death of the Countess of Abingdon, under the title of *ELEONORA*; a poem, which cannot be classed among his happiest effusions, and was attended with the singular circumstance of containing an high encomium on a lady whom the author never saw, composed at the desire of a nobleman with whom he was not personally acquainted.

A translation of Polybius having been made by his friend, Sir Henry Shere, in the latter end of the year 1692, he wrote for that work an account

a doubtful elocution, from being discovered by Nero. The bookseller having thought, with reason, that it would conduce most to his advantage to have the Persius wholly done by Mr. Dryden, hath occasioned a delay in the publication of that and the Juvenal, which, however, will both appear speedily." *GENT. JOUR.* for April, 1692.

of that excellent historian; and soon afterwards interchanged his toils by preparing some poetical translations and some original poems for his **THIRD MISCELLANY**, which was issued from the press in July, 1693,⁶ with a Dedication to Lord Radcliffe, (the eldest son of the Earl of Derwentwater,) who had married a natural daughter of Charles the Second: from which Dryden seems to have had some expectations that were not fulfilled.⁷ The pieces which appeared for the first time in this Collection, are, a translation of the first book of Ovid's **METAMORPHOSES**, with select parts of the ninth and fourteenth books; a few songs; and the parting of Hector and Andromache, from the sixth Iliad. He also appears to have translated from the Greek the poem of **HERO AND LEANDER**, which he once intended to have inserted in this Miscellany;⁸ but it was not then published, and probably the manuscript is now no where to be found.

Early in that year, Congreve's first play, **THE OLD BACHELOR**, was performed. We know from unquestionable authority, that, in preparing that comedy for the stage, the young poet derived considerable aid from our author. The attachment to which this circumstance gave rise, and the kindness that Congreve, at a subsequent period, shewed to the remains of his friend, by a charac-

⁶ GENT. JOURN. for July, 1693.

⁷ See Letter VII. from our author to Jacob Tonson, in this volume.

⁸ Letter VIII. from Jacob Tonson to Dryden.

teristick eulogy, renders him peculiarly entitled to the notice of Dryden's biographer. He was bred at the school of Kilkenny, in Ireland; and after having studied for some years in the University of Dublin, into which he was admitted in 1685,⁹ he came to England, probably to his father's house, who then resided in Staffordshire. On the 17th of March, 1690-91, he became a Member of the Society of the Middle Temple,¹ with the view of studying law; but growing weary of that pursuit, he is said soon afterwards to have begun his celebrated comedy, at which time he is represented to have been only *nineteen* years old. Having no acquaintance with the manager of the theatre, Mr. Thomas D'Avenant, he found means to be introduced to Southerne, then an established playwright; who warmly espoused the interest of his young countryman, as he supposed him, and strongly recommended him to the notice and protection of Dryden.² After reading his comedy over, Dryden

⁹ "Anno 1685. Die quinto Aprilis, hora dec. pomerid. Gulielmus Congreve, Pensiō. filius Gul. Congreve, generosi, de Yogholia, annos natus sexdecim, natus Bard-sagran. in com. Eboracen. educ. Kilkennizæ sub fer. Doct. Hinton. Tutor. St. George Ashe." Regr. Universitat. Dublin.

¹ The following entry is extracted from the Register of the Society of the Middle Temple:

"Marti 17^{mo} 1690-[91]. Mr. Wilmus. Congreve. filius et heres appatens Wilmi Congreve de Stratton fit Com. Staffordiz, Ar. admittus est in Societatem Mediæ Templi, specialiter."

² MSS. Harl. 4881.

declared, that he never saw such a first play, though from the author's inexperience it stood in need of some corrections, to render it fitting for representation on the stage; which he readily supplied. So high was the opinion entertained of Congreve, after Dryden's perusal of his play, that, for some time before its appearance on the stage, he was admitted to the freedom of the theatre.¹ At length in January, 1692-3, *THE OLD BACHELOR* was performed, with such success, that, before the end of the following month, three editions of it passed through the press.² As at the time of the author's sitting down to compose this play, he is said to have been only nineteen, so at that of its representation, we are told by all his biographers, that he was but one-and-twenty.³ The marvellous is always so much more captivating than simple truth,

¹ MS. Harl. *ut supr.*

² GENT. JOURN. for 1692-3, p. 61.

³ So says Dr. Birch in the GENERAL DICTIONARY, from the information of Southerne. So also Lord Falkland, in a Prologue intended for *THE OLD BACHELOR*:

"As for our youngster, I am apt to doubt him,
 "With all the vigour of his youth about him;
 "But he, more sanguine, trusts in *one-and-twenty*,
 "And impudently hopes he shall content you."

And so also Dr. Johnson, (in his Life of Congreve,) relying on these authorities: "The age of the writer considered, it is indeed a very wonderful performance; for, whenever written, it was acted (1693) when he was not more than *twenty-one* years old."

that we are not to wonder at this early exertion of his talents having been rendered still more extraordinary, by subtracting somewhat from his real age. At what time he began to write this comedy, has not been ascertained either by himself or his friend Southerne; but if, according to the account given by the latter to Dr. Birch, two years only intervened between its composition and its performance, he was twenty-one, when he began to write it; for assuredly, when it was first exhibited, he was twenty-three years old. This fact is ascertained by the Register of Bardsey, in Yorkshire, from which it appears that he was baptised there, February 10, 1669-70.* Every year at that early

* "William, the sonne of Mr. William Congreve, of Bardsey Grange, was baptised, Febr. 10th, 1669."—Register of the parish of Bardsey, or Bardsa, in the West Riding of the county of York.

For this extract I am indebted to the Reverend Francis Wilkinson, Vicar of that parish.

Bardsey, as Mr. Wilkinson informs me, is a village in a singularly retired situation, about eight miles from Leeds. The tradition of the village is, that Congreve's father resided only a short time at Bardsey Grange, which appears to have been the manor-house, and was once the estate of Francis Thorpe, Esq. who was a Baron of the Exchequer during the Usurpation of Cromwell, and is said to have been a near relation of the poet's mother. But Jacob, from the information of Congreve himself, tells us, that at the time of the poet's birth, Bardsey Grange was part of the estate of Sir John Lewis, his mother's uncle.

period of life being of great importance in estimating the merit of a piece which professes to exhibit the manners and characters of men, this minute account of the age of this great comick writer, I trust, will not be considered tedious or uninteresting. On another ground also it may be pardoned; for it has long been a doubt, whether Congreve was born in England or Ireland, a question which may now for ever be at rest. It is a singular circumstance, that Southerne, who lived in great intimacy with this poet, should have con-

Congreve died on the 19th of January, 1728-9, at which time he had nearly completed his sixtieth year; yet on his monument in Westminster Abbey, erected by Henrietta, Duchess of Marlborough, he is said to have been only *fifty-six* years old: a striking instance of the inaccuracy of tombstones. See p. 5.

"Whatever objections (says Dr. Johnson) may be made either to Congreve's comick or tragick excellence, they are lost at once in the blaze of admiration, when it is remembered that he had produced these *four* plays before he had passed his *twenty-fifth* year; before other men, even such as are some time to shine in eminence, have passed their probation of literature, or presume to hope for any other notice than such as is bestowed on diligence and inquiry. Among all the efforts of early genius which literary history records, I doubt whether any one can be produced that more supasses the common limits of nature than the plays of Congreve."

Sufficient subject for admiration will still remain; but we now find, from unquestionable authority, that when Congreve produced his fourth play, he was in his *twenty-eighth* year.

stantly affirmed that he was an Irishman, speaking of him after his death with sharp censure, as a man that meanly denied his country ;⁶ and that he should have been equally incorrect concerning his friend's age, when he produced his first comedy. His inaccuracy in these points, which have now far above half a century been mistated on the testimony of an intimate friend and contemporary, of unimpeached veracity, may shew, how extremely difficult it is, at any considerable distance of time, to ascertain with precision the smaller incidents of biography ; and may entitle those to some degree of indulgence, who, however sedulous they may be in their researches, are still liable to minute errors.

Previous to the performance of *THE OLD BACHELOR*, the author, in the month of January, 1692-3, furnished his friend Southerne with a

⁶ Johnson, in his *Life of Congreve* ; probably from the information of John, Earl of Orrery, with whom Southerne lived much in his latter days.

Congreve is enrolled among the Irish Writers, by Harris, in his edition of Ware's History. The notion, indeed, that he was an Irishman, prevailed in his own time ; for in " *Animadversions on his Answer to Collier*," 8vo. 1698, we find the following dialogue :—
JOHNSON. " Will Congreve's alive, man ; he's my countryman ; he has been regenerated ever since he turn'd poet, and his Muse has had a new birth too since the Peace. SMITH. What *miracle* has made him a Staffordshire-man, I know not ; but I'm sure his *Musè*, for all his fine flights, is but a bog-trotter still."

Song, which was introduced in his comedy entitled *THE MAID'S LAST PRAYER*, and was perhaps the first acknowledged essay presented by Congreve to the publick.⁷ From this period he lived

⁷ "Tell me no more, I am deceiv'd," &c. set by Purcell: in return for which Southerne addressed some commendatory verses to Congreve, in which he thus at once compliments his old and young friend:

"Dryden has long extended his command,
 "By right divine, quite through the Muses' land,
 "Absolute lord; and holding now from none
 "But great Apollo his undoubted crown,—
 "That empire settled, and grown old in power,—
 "Can wish for nothing but a successor;
 "Not to enlarge his limits, but maintain
 "Those provinces, which he alone could gain.
 "His eldest, Wycherley, in wise retreat,
 "Thought it not worth his quiet to be great;
 "Loose wand'ring Etherege, in wild pleasure tost,
 "And foreign interests, to his hopes long lost;
 "Poor Lee and Otway dead; Congreve appears
 "The darling and last comfort of his years.
 "May'st thou live long in thy great master's smiles,
 "And growing under him, adorn these isles!
 "But when—when part of him, (be that but late!)
 "His body yielding, must submit to fate;
 "Leaving his deathless works, and thee, behind,
 "The natural successor of his mind,
 "Then may'st thou finish what he has begun,
 "Heir to his merit, be in fame his son!"

In the same strain, Bevill Higgons:

"What may'n't we then, great youth, of thee presage,
 "Whose art and wit so much transcend thy age!

with Dryden in great intimacy,⁸ and towards the close of that year was honoured by him with the well-known verses prefixed to *THE DOUBLE DEALER*, which was exhibited in Nov. 1693 :⁹ verses of such excellence, that however often they are perused, they can never cease to be read with delight and admiration. Immediately after the performance of *THE DOUBLE DEALER*, our author's *LOVE TRIUMPHANT* was represented, as has been already mentioned ; and in an unpublished letter written to Mr. Walsh, during the run of the former piece, (from which I regret that I can only give a short extract,) Dryden thus speaks of his young friend's second play, with some reference to his own tragi-comedy :

“ Congreve's *DOUBLE DEALER* is much censured

“ How wilt thou shine in thy meridian light,

“ Who, at thy rising, give so vast a light !

“ When DRYDEN, dying, shall the world deceive,

“ Whom we immortal as his works believe,

“ Thou shalt succeed, the glory of the stage,

“ Adorn and entertain the coming age.”

See the Commendatory Verses prefixed to *THE OLD BACHELOR*.

⁸ In the Dedication of *THE THIRD MISCELLANY*, published in the middle of the year 1693, Dryden having occasion to speak of Congreve, adds—“ whom I cannot mention without the honour which is due to his excellent parts, and that entire affection which I bear him.” See also his Letters to Jacob Tonson, and the Postscript to his Translation of Virgil.

⁹ GENT. JOURN. vol. ii. p. 374.

" by the greater part of the town, and is defended
 " only by the best judges, who, you know, are
 " commonly the fewest. Yet it gains ground
 " daily, and has already been acted eight times.
 " The women think he has exposed - - - - - ;
 " and the gentlemen are offended with him for
 " the discovery of their follies, and the way of
 " their intrigue under the notions of friendship to
 " their ladies' husbands.

" I am afraid you discover not your own opi-
 " nion concerning my irregular use of tragi-
 " comedy, in my *doppia favola*. I will never de-
 " fend that practice, for I know it distracts the
 " hearers,¹ but know withal, that it has hitherto
 " pleased them for the sake of variety, and for
 " the particular taste which they have to low
 " comedy."

Jacob Tonson, encouraged by the success of the various poetical Miscellanies which he had published in preceding years, consisting of short compositions by Dryden and others, now entertained hopes of being able regularly to furnish the readers of poetry with a periodical work, similar to those which had already appeared; and early in 1694 issued out another volume of the same kind, entitled *THE ANNUAL MISCELLANY*; to which Dryden contributed only a version of the third Georgick, and an Epistle to Sir Godfrey Kneller, probably

¹ He makes the same acknowledgment in *THE PARALLEL OF POETRY AND PAINTING*. See vol. iii. p. 340.

written in the preceding year, in return for a portrait of Shakspeare, which Kneller painted and presented to him.³

Having declared that he would write no more for the stage, he now sat down to the most arduous of all his literary labours, a complete translation of Virgil; which, it should seem from what he has dropped concerning it, was first suggested to him by Tonson.⁴ As he was now known to be poor, it was probably a very general wish that he should undertake some great work, which might be attended with considerable profit; and so early as 1692, an obscure poetaster endeavoured to draw his attention to the *Æneid*.⁴ In March, 1694, Motteux, who appears to have been well acquainted with Dryden, expresses a hope that he would give the world a version of the great Roman poet;⁵ and in a letter written about that time by

³ It was copied from the only original portrait of Shakspeare hitherto discovered, which was then in Mr. Betterton's possession, and now belongs to the Chandos family. Kneller's copy is now in the collection of Earl Fitzwilliam, at Wentworth-House, in Yorkshire.

⁴ See vol. iii. p. 546.

⁴ Poems by Thomas Fletcher, 8vo. 1692. Pref.

⁵ "We hope that Mr. Dryden will undertake to give us a translation of Virgil. It is indeed a most difficult work; but if any one can assure himself of success in attempting so bold a task, it is doubtless the Virgil of our age, for whose noble pen that best of Latin poets seems reserved." GENT. JOURN. vol. iii. p. 63,

our author himself to Dennis the Critick, he thus modestly speaks of the projected work : " If I undertake a translation of Virgil, the little which I can perform will shew, at least, that no man is fit to write after him, in a barbarous modern tongue."⁶ Hopkins, another friend and admirer, in some verses written probably soon afterwards, announced that the work was begun.

Dr. Johnson has justly remarked, that the nation seemed to consider its honour interested in the event. Mr. Gilbert Dolben⁷ gave him the various editions of his author : Dr. Knightly Chetwood furnished him with the *Life of Virgil*⁸ and the *Preface to the Pastorals* ;⁹ and Addison sup-

- ⁶ " With joy I learn'd, Dryden designs to crown
- " All the great things he has already done :
- " No loss, no change of vigour can he feel,
- " Who dares attempt the sacred Mantuan still."

Epistle from Cha. Hopkins to Antony Hammond,
Esq. written in 1694.—Moyle's Works, published by Hammond, 8vo. 1727.

⁷ Eldest son of Dr. John Dolben, the learned Archbishop of York ; who was afterwards created a Baronet by Queen Anne, and for many years represented the city of Peterborough in Parliament. He was appointed a Justice of the Common Pleas in Ireland by William the Third, and held that office for twenty years.

⁸ See Dryden's Letters to Jacob Tonson. Of Dr. Knightly Chetwood, who was afterwards Dean of Gloucester, some account may be found in vol. iii. p. 547.

⁹ Dr. Chetwood's Essay on Pastoral Poetry is fre-

plied the arguments of the several books, and an Essay on the Georgicks." The first lines of this great poet which he translated, he wrote with a diamond on a pane of glass in one of the windows of Chesterton-House, in Huntingtonshire,* the residence of his kinsman and namesake, John Driden, Esq. The Version of the first Georgick and a great part of the last *Æneid* was made at Denham-Court, in Buckinghamshire, the seat of Sir William Bowyer, Baronet; and the seventh *Æneid* was translated at Burleigh, the noble mansion of the Earl of Exeter. These circumstances, which must be acknowledged to be of no great importance, I yet have thought it proper to record, because they will for ever endear those places to the votaries of the Muses, and add to them a kind of celebrity, which neither the beauties of nature nor the exertions of art can bestow.

It was resolved to print the work by subscription, and it has been represented as the first splendid undertaking of this kind. But that is not the fact; for Milton's great poem, as we have seen, been printed by subscription some years be-

quently attributed to Walsh, and has been erroneously printed among that gentleman's works.

* See Tickell's Preface to Addison's Works, and Steele's Dedication of *THE DRUMMER*, 4to. 1722.

* This little circumstance was communicated by Mrs. Honor Pigott, whose father was great-nephew to our author's kinsman, John Driden, of Chesterton.

fore;¹ and in 1691, Wood's *ATHENÆ OXONIENSIS* was issued out in the same manner.²

Pope, speaking of his own great version, said to Mr. Spence, in 1736,—“ I began the *Iliad* in my twenty-fifth year; and it took up that and five more to finish it. Mr. Dryden, though they always talk of his being hurried so much, was as long in translating Virgil. Indeed he wrote plays and other things in the same period.”³ It is strange that this great poet, who lived so near the time, should have been so inaccurate in his account of his predecessor's performance; for, during the period in which this translation was made, Dryden certainly wrote not a single play; and the work, instead of consuming six years, employed

¹ Early in the last century, Minshieu prefixed to his *GUIDE TO THE TONGUES*, (fol. 1617,) a List of those persons who had purchased his work, with a view to induce others to buy the remaining copies. This list he occasionally enlarged, by printing a new leaf. In my copy four hundred and twenty names are found. But it does not appear that the noblemen and others whose names are given, (among whom we find Shakspeare's patron, the Earl of Southampton,) countenanced the undertaking, previous to the publication of the work; and therefore they cannot be considered as *Subscribers*, in the sense in which we now use the word.

² Wood disposed of about 415 copies by subscription; and it appears from an advertisement in the *London Gazette*, June 8, 1691, that eighty-five copies only remained for sale to non-subscribers.

³ Spence's *ANECDOTES*.

but half that time. It appears to have been begun in the summer of 1694; and from a letter now before me, written by Basil Kennet to Jacob Tonson, in September, 1696, I learn, that it was then nearly finished; so that it probably was sent to the press in the beginning of 1697; and it was published in the following July,⁶ not more than three years from its having been originally undertaken. It is painful to learn from one of our author's letters to Tonson, that he would have made the annotations on this work much more ample, but that the bookseller would not make him any compensation for them. "I am not sorry (says he) that you would not allow any thing towards the Notes; for to make them good, would have cost half a year's time at least. - - - It would require seven years to translate Virgil exactly."

What the precise terms were, on which this version was given to the publick, it is now not easy to ascertain. One set of Subscribers, consisting of one hundred and one persons, contributed five guineas each, to adorn the work with engravings;

⁶ In the London Gazette, (N^o. 3300,) Monday, June 28, 1697, is the following Advertisement:

"The works of Virgil, containing his Pastorals, Georgicks, and Encis, translated into English verse by Mr. Dryden, and adorned with one hundred cuts, will be finished this week, and be ready next week to be delivered, as subscribed for, in quires, upon bringing the receipt for the first payment, and paying the second. Printed for Jacob Tonson," &c.

which, however, were only the old plates used by Ogilby thirty-five years before, retouched.¹ The second set of Subscribers, who paid two guineas each, were two hundred and fifty-two; so that the whole subscription-money amounted to more than one thousand guineas: but from the first subscription a certain sum, perhaps two guineas of each contribution, was retained by Tonson,² I suppose to defray the expence of the plates. What deduction was made from the sum paid by the second set of Subscribers, I have no means of discovering; but perhaps of this sum, one half was retained by the bookseller, and the remainder belonged to our author. From some passages in his letters to Tonson it may be collected, that he received fifty pounds for each of the *Georgicks* and *Æneids*,³ and probably the same sum for the whole of the *Pastorals*. If, therefore, we suppose

¹ Spence.

² Dryden's Letter (XVI.) to Jacob Tonson.

³ "I give you notice, that I have done the seaventh Eneid in the country, and intend some few days hence to go upon the eight: when that is finish'd, I expect *fifty pounds* in good silver; not such as I have had formerly." LETTER XIII. to Jacob Tonson.—See also LETTER X. " 'Tis now three dayes since I have ended the fourth Eneid. - - - The paying Ned Sheldon *fifty pounds* put me upon this speed. - - - You may, if you please, come to me at the Coffee-house this afternoon, or at farthest tomorrow, that we may take care together, where and when I may receive the *fifty pounds*, and the guineys."—The guineas, I suppose, were part of the subscription-money.

that the bookseller was bound to furnish the Subscribers with their books, Dryden's profits, after all deductions, would be thirteen hundred and ninety-six pounds, twelve shillings and sixpence.¹ Pope, however, told Mr. Spence, that he had cleared every way, by this translation, only about twelve hundred pounds.² If his statement be correct, Tonson probably had a still larger portion of the second subscriptions than I have supposed.—No apology can be necessary for the minuteness with which I have endeavoured to trace the history and profits of a work, which Pope pronounced to be "the most noble and spirited translation that he knew in any language."³

Swift has censured Dryden for dedicating this work to three different patrons, as if that were a novel practice, first introduced by our author. He might have been told of Spencer, of Chapman, of

¹ I estimate the guinea at £.1. 1s. 6d., and in my calculation I have not included the third Georgick; for that having been purchased before, and printed in the **FOURTH MISCELLANY**, Tonson probably allowed nothing for it.

² **ANECDOTES.**

³ The subscribers to Pope's Translation of the *Iliad*, were five hundred and seventy-five; and the copies subscribed for were six hundred and fifty-four. He therefore, according to Dr. Johnson, "gained by that work, five thousand three hundred and twenty pounds, four shillings." Probably, however, he gained still more; for the Princess of Wales, the Earl of Oxford, and many other of his great friends, who appear in the List only as Subscribers for single copies, made him very liberal presents.

Fuller, and others, who were equally "lavish and discreet," long before the publication of the English Virgil; and in modern times, Garth, Young, and Thomson, have not disdained to follow Dryden's example. Swift, though his kinsman,¹ seems

¹ It is not easy to ascertain the exact degree of relationship between Dryden and Swift. He is said by his kinsman Deane Swift, and by Hawkesworth after him, to have been our author's *second* cousin; the grandson of Elizabeth, one of the daughters of Sir Erasmus Driden; but this could not be the case, for that lady was married to Sir Richard Philipps, Bart. The wife, therefore, of Thomas Swift, Vicar of Goodrich, in Herefordshire, and grandfather to the celebrated Jonathan Swift, being acknowledged to have been Elizabeth Dryden, must be sought for in some other branch of the Dryden family. From MERCURIUS RUSTICUS, p. 75, it appears, that in October, 1642, she had, beside ten children who supplicated her plunderers for bread, an *infant* in the cradle, and afterwards she had three more children; so that she probably was younger than any of the daughters of Sir Erasmus Driden, all of whom, I believe, were born before the year 1600. On her husband's living being sequestered, the profits of it were consigned to *Jonathan Dryden*, minister, who was probably her brother; and they were, I conceive, the children of a brother of Sir Erasmus Driden: he had five brothers. If I am right in this conjecture, the Dean of St. Patrick's *father*, and our author, were only second cousins. Swift's grandfather, Thomas, had ten sons, of which the fifth, Jonathan, (the Dean's father,) was probably named from Jonathan Dryden above mentioned, who was, I believe, his uncle: another of the sons (who, as well as Jonathan, was an at-

to have hated him, and has taken every opportunity of depreciating him. "I do affirm (says he, in the Dedication of *THE TALE OF A TUB*, to Prince Posterity,) upon the word of a sincere man, that there is now actually in being a certain poet called John Dryden, whose translation of Virgil was lately printed in a large folio well-bound, and if diligent search were made, for aught I know, is yet to be seen." In his *BATTLE OF THE BOOKS*, he again speaks of this translation with equal contempt; and in his *RHAPSODY ON POETRY*, thus undervalues Dryden's critical labours:

- "Put on the Critick's brow, and sit
- "At Will's, the puny judge of wit. - - -
- "Learn Aristotle's rules by rote,
- "And at all hazards boldly quote.
- "Judicious Rymer oft review,
- "Wise Dennis, and profound Bossu.
- "Read all the Prefaces of Dryden,⁴
- "For these our criticks much confide in;
- "Though merely writ, at first, for filling,
- "To raise the volume's price a shilling."

torney.) was called, *Dryden* Swift, in honour of his mother; a circumstance which confirms the tradition concerning the relationship between these two celebrated men.

Swift, in one of his letters, calls Dryden his *near* relation; but in the last age, a greater account was made of consanguinity than at present. A second or third cousin was then considered a near relation.

⁴ Dr. Johnson says, "Swift, who conversed with Dryden, relates, that he regretted the success of his own

However pleasant and useful it may be to live sometimes with the laughers, we must not greatly rely on them for accuracy of statement; for if they can but produce a lively representation, they are not always nicely scrupulous concerning truth. The greater part of Dryden's Prefaces are prefixed to his plays, which were sold at the stated price of all other plays, and did not produce to the author any additional emolument in consequence of a prefatory appendage: nor would his *Virgil*, I believe, have brought him one shilling the less, though it had been given to the world without

instructions, and found his readers made suddenly too skillful to be easily satisfied." The word *relates* seems to refer to some passage in Swift's printed works; but I have in vain sought for any such observation in his very miscellaneous volumes. That Dryden regretted the success of his instructions, not in any of his printed pieces, but in conversation with Swift, was certainly Dr. Johnson's notion, by his adding—" *who conversed with Dryden.*"— In the Preface, however, to *ALBION AND ALBANIUS*, vol. ii. p. 162, we have a sentiment somewhat similar; for he says, he will not lay down the rules for writing an Opera, lest he should thus "set up some little judges, who, not understanding thoroughly, would be sure to fall upon the faults, and not to acknowledge any of the beauties; an hard measure, which I have often found from false criticks." Again, in the Preface to *ŒDIPUS*:—"But we have given you more than was necessary for a Preface; and, for aught we know, may gain no more by our instructions than that politick nation is like to do, who have taught their enemies to fight so long, that at last they are in a condition to invade them."

either Preface or Dedication of any kind. The origin of all this malignity was, Swift's having submitted to Dryden, for his perusal and judgment, (probably about the year 1692,) a parcel of Pindarick Odes, which the old bard returned some time afterwards, saying, "*Cousin Swift, you will never be a poet.*" Three of these Odes have since been published,⁶ and are such miserable perform-

⁵ Deane Swift's *Essay on the Life of Swift*, p. 117; and Johnson, in his *Life of Dryden*. He probably communicated this anecdote to his amanuensis, Shiels, who introduced it (*from authentick information*) in the account of Swift, inserted in Cibber's *LIVES OF THE POETS*, previous to the appearance of Deane Swift's *Essay*.

⁶ An Ode to Sir William Temple, written in 1689; an Ode to King William, on his going to Ireland; and an Ode to the Athenian Society, written in 1691. The first and last of these Odes are inserted in the common editions of Swift's works; but the second long remained sheltered in Dunton's *ATHENIAN ORACLE*, (selected from a larger work, and published in three volumes, 8vo.) from which it has been reprinted in a book entitled *LITERARY RELICKS*, by G. M. Berkeley, Esq. 8vo. 1789.

It is curious to observe the different aspects under which celebrated men appear at different periods of their lives. John Dunton, the original projector of the Athenian Society, in his *LIFE AND ERROURS*, 8vo. 1705, giving a list of the authors of that day, with whom he had dealings, thus characterizes the celebrated writer of these Odes:

"Mr. Swift, a *country gentleman*, sent an Ode to the Athenian Society, which, being an ingenious poem, was prefixed to the fifth Supplement of the *ATHENIAN MERCURY*."

ances, that they fully justify the judgment which Dryden *then* formed of his kinsman. I may add, that it is not surprising that Dryden's declaration, —while he was struggling with want and oppressed by sickness,—that “ he thanked God that he possessed his soul in patience,” should be sneered at by him, the greater part of whose life was embittered by disappointed ambition, and who has himself told us, that in the grave alone he expected freedom from the exacerbations of anger and disgust, which for a long series of years had lacerated his bosom.

A more heavy charge than this of Swift has been made against our author's Dedications in general. “ Of dramattick immorality,” says Dr. Johnson, “ he did not want examples among his predecessors, or companions among his contemporaries ; but in the meanness and servility of hyperbolical adulation, I know not whether, since the days in which the Roman Emperours were deified, he has been ever equalled, except by Afra Behn in an address to Eleanor Gwyn. When once he has undertaken the task of praise, he no longer retains shame in himself, nor supposes it in his patron. As many odoriferous bodies are observed to diffuse perfumes from year to year, without sensible diminution of bulk or weight, he appears never to have impoverished his mint of flattery by his expences, however lavish. He had all the forms of excellence, intellectual and moral, combined in his mind, with endless variation ; and when he had scattered on the

hero of the day the golden shower of wit and virtue, he had ready for him whom he wished to court on the morrow, new wit and virtue with another stamp. Of this kind of meanness he never seems to decline the practice, or lament the necessity: he considers the great as entitled to encomiastick homage, and brings praise rather as a tribute than a gift, more delighted with the fertility of his invention than mortified by the prostitution of his judgment."

In this animated passage, that noble spirit of independence for which this great writer was all his life distinguished, is eminently conspicuous. Actuated by these sentiments, he never dedicated any work, except the Plan of his Dictionary, which was addressed to Lord Chesterfield. But the matter has been stated far more unfavourably for Dryden, than the history of the period during which he wrote will justify. The encomiastick language which is sometimes found in his Dedications,¹ was the vice of the time, not of the man. The

¹ Butler, with his usual vivacity, thus accounts for the first introduction of Dedications of books:

"A modern critick (he observes) censures in gross, and condemns all, without examining particulars.—If they will not confess and accuse themselves, he will rack them, until they do. He is a *Committee-man* in the commonwealth of letters, and as great a tyrant; so is not bound to proceed but by his own rules, which he will not endure to be disputed. He has been an apocryphal scribbler himself; but his writings wanting authority, he

Dedication of almost every other author of the last age was equally loaded with flattery, and sometimes far surpassed any of Dryden's in extravagance of praise : nor was any kind of disgrace annexed to this exercise of men's talents ; the contest among the whole tribe of writers of every description, however humble or however eminent, being, who should go furthest in panegyrick, in the most graceful way, and with the happiest turns of expression. Butler, as the late Mr. Burke several

grew discontent, and turned apostate, and thence becomes so severe to those of his own profession. He never commends any thing but in opposition to something else that he would undervalue ; and commonly sides with the weakest, which is generous any where but in judging. He is worse than an *Index Expurgatorius* ; for he blots out all, and, when he cannot find a fault, makes one. He *demurs* to all writers, and when he is *over-ruled*, will run into *contempt*. He is always bringing writs of error, like a pettifogger, and reversing of *judgments*, though the case be never so plain. He is a mountebank, that is always quacking of the infirm and diseased parts of books, to shew his skill ; but has nothing at all to do with the sound. He is a very ungentle reader ; for he reads sentence on all authors that have the unhappiness to come before him ; and therefore pedants, that stand in fear of him, always appeal from him beforehand, by the name of Momus and Zoilus ; complain sorely of his extrajudicial proceedings, and protest against him as corrupt, and his judgment void and of none effect ; and put themselves into the protection of some powerful *Patron*, who, like a knight-errant, is to encounter with the magician, and free them from his enchantments." GENUINE REMAINS, ii. 307. 8vo. 1759.

years ago observed to me, has well illustrated the principle on which they went, where he compares their endeavours to those of the archer, who *draws his arrow to the head*, whether his object be a swan, or a goose.⁹ The addresses prefixed to the various pieces issued from the press from the Restoration to the end of the reign of Queen Anne, fully support this remark. Though very few of them are written with the spirit and elegance that are found in our author's Dedications, they by no means fall short of them in hyperbolical adulation.⁹

• HUDIBRAS, P. II. c. i.

- " This has been done by some, who those
- " They adored in rhyme, would kick in prose ; . . .
- " That have the hard fate to write best
- " Of those still that deserve it least :
- " It matters not how false or forc'd,
- " So the best things be said o' the worst :
- " It goes for nothing when 'tis said ;
- " Only the arrow's drawn to the head,
- " Whether it be a swan or goose
- " They level at: so shepherds use
- " To set the same mark on the hip
- " Both of their sound and rotten sheep."

• All Addresses to persons in high station, whether in prose or verse, were in the time of Dryden filled with the most extravagant encomiums. Afra Behn, whose adulation to one of the mistresses of Charles the Second has been noticed by Dr. Johnson, had a portion of the same incense equally ready for his *inconsolable* widow, whom she thus addresses in an Elegy written soon after his death :

To the numerous encomiastick Addresses which are found in his works, some of his friends, and his eldest son, seem to have wished that he should

" But when such sacrifice from us is due,
 " What must the mighty loss exact from you,
 " Who mourn a King, and *dear-lov'd husband* too !
 " How shall we measure that vast tide of woe,
 " That did your royal *breaking* heart o'erflow ?

* * * * *

" Should all the nation's tenderest griefs combine,
 " And all our pangs in one vast body join,
 " They could not sigh with agonies like thine." }

She then describes the Queen flying eagerly to her husband's bed, after his death :

" Such vigorous life ne'er moved your steps before,
 " But here they sunk beneath the weight they bore :
 " Princes we more than human do allow,
 " You must have been above an angel too,
 " Had you resisted this sad strain of woe. }
 " So the blest VIRGIN, at the world's great loss,
 " Came and beheld, then *fainted* at the Cross !"

" A Poem humbly dedicated to the great pattern of piety and virtue, Catharine, Queen Dowager, on the death of her *dear* Lord and Husband." fol. 1685.

So also the learned Joshua Barnes, addressing the same Queen (*Mestissima ac Latissima Academia Cantabrigiensi Affectus*," &c. 4to. 1684-5) :

" We'd piously condole and lend relief,
 " With loyal art, to your *exuberant* grief ;
 " But ah ! we're drown'd in tears as well as you ;
 " In Charles's death all England's widow'd too.

have added one more, by dedicating his *Virgil* to King William. This proposal it is much to his honour that he rejected; for attached as he had been for many years, however erroneously, to the

- " You lost a husband, and *the best that e'er*
- " *Did th' honourable chains of wedlock wear* ;
- " 'Tis true; and sure your grief we must allow ;
- " But we're concern'd, great Queen, as deep as you :
- " But we the best of worthiest Kings have lost ;
- " No tender father could like mercies boast :
- " No heart can fathom, and no tongue relate
- " Those blessings, that on Charles's reign did wait !

Thus also the same great scholar, addressing the *virtuous* and *humane* Jefferies, in what is called a Pindarick Poem, published in October, 1685, after his return from the *Bloody Western Circuit*,—In the preceding month he had been made Lord Chancellor :

- " Arise, my Muse, now take a loftier flight,
- " Toward Heaven thy daring pinions try ;
- " There on the Sun fix thou thine eagle sight,
- " The object's good, altho' 'tis high ;
- " And he who sits to James so nigh,
- " Though *just* he be, in *mercy* must delight.
- " This day* all Cambridge did conspire
- " To praise those glories we admire :
- " Be that my single task, which pleas'd that learned quire.
- " This day our sacred body, all convened,
- " (Where loyalty and knowledge do preside,)
- " Decreed to honour mighty Cæsar's friend,
- " *The Muses' glory, and Astrea's pride.*

* October 5.

abdicated Monarch, he could not have addressed a panegyrick to his successor, though unques-

- " To him their humble compliments they send,
- " Tho' sorry, all their art's too low
- " The height of his just eminence to shew ;
- " Much less with equal praise his *virtues* to commend ;
- " Virtues as far beyond his high degree,
- " As him above ourselves we see :
- " The prop whereon Justice and Law do trust,
- " Rais'd up aloft by James the just ;
- " By James, of whom with pride Apollo sings,
- " The best of friends, of brothers, and of Kings.

* * * * *

- " Great Jefferies ! yet not half so great as *good*,
- " How little was thy worth once understood !
- " How lay it unreveal'd,
- " Like a rich gem in dirty mines conceal'd,
- " When by the *Mobile* so much abused !
- " Or rather then, how was thy virtue known,
- " And dreaded by the vice-empoison'd town,
- " Who thee, as sinful Jews the SAVIOUR once, refused !

* * * * *

- " And thus, while in thy brighter soul there stood
- " *The heavenly form of all that's just and good*,
- " Its beauties godlike James beheld,
- " For virtue best can virtue's beauties find ;
- " And straight with love divine his bosom swell'd,—
- " Only *such perfect forms* affect so great a mind !"

But nothing can place the observation in the text in a stronger point of view, than the following extraordinary production, written, not by a distressed poetess, or embarrassed author, but by Sir Francis Fane, an independent gentleman and a Knight of the Bath, who in 1675.

tionably worthy of the highest praise, without forfeiting all pretensions to consistency and dignity of

was not ashamed thus to address John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, (then only twenty-eight years old,) in the Dedication of his comedy entitled *LOVE IN THE DARK*; for which I do not know that he ever was censured by any of his contemporaries :

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

JOHN, EARL OF ROCHESTER,

Gentleman of his Majesty's Bedchamber.

MY LORD,

" Offenders, long connived at, come at last to be tried for their lives, and are forced to call upon their fatally indulgent friends to bring them off; for volunteer poets are at least as mad as those who, out of wantonness, play themselves into the gallies. It is high time to cast myself at your Lordship's feet, and humbly beg your protection to this rude piece, which grew the bolder by your encouragement. All poems, in their Dedications, ought to return to your Lordship, as all rivers to the sea, from whose depth and saltness they are seasoned and supplied; none of them ever coming to your Lordship's hands, without receiving some of the rich tinctures of your unerring judgment; and running with much more clearness, having past so fine a strainer. If this receives any approbation in the world, I must ascribe it principally to your Lordship's partial recommendations, and impartial corrections.

" Your Lordship is the first person in the world, by whom I have been highly and heroically obliged: and if the first impressions of gratitude may be as strong and captivating as those of the first love, they must needs be

character. Tonson, his bookseller, was so desirous of procuring this Dedication, which he probably

much more lasting and immutable, in my passion for your Lordship ; since the world affords no object so high and admirable, ever to work a change, *your Lordship being the most accomplished of all mankind that I ever knew, read, or heard of, by human testimony.* Eminent beings are as hard to be believed, as they are to be understood ; and no man can speak truth of your Lordship's superlative endowments without suspicion of flattery, nor conceal them without conviction of ignorance. That famous temper of weight, so rarely found in bodies, appears most illustriously in your Lordship's mind. Judgment and fancy, seldom concurring in other men, in any small proportion, are *possessed by your Lordship in the highest degree that ever was allowed the soul of man ;* yet with so happy and harmonious a mixture, that neither of them predominate nor usurp, but, like two peaceful colleagues in empire, agree within themselves, and govern the rest of the world : acting, in your Lordship's noble and elevated mind, like fire and air in the upper region, whose purity makes them easily convertible, and mutually assistant, whilst they are always quarrelling and preying upon each other in gross inferior bodies. What was favourably said of my Lord Bacon in his time, may much more justly be affirmed of your Lordship in yours ;— *That if ever there were a beam of knowledge immediately derived from GOD, upon any man, since the Creation, there is one upon yourself.* Others, by wearisome steps, and regular gradations, climb up to knowledge ; your Lordship is flown up to the top of the hill : you are an enthusiast in wit, a poet and philosopher by *revelation ;* and have already, in your tender age, set out such new and glorious lights in poetry, yet those so *orthodox* and un-

imagined would promote the sale of the book, that, in retouching the plates, he made the engraver throughout the work always represent Æneas with a hooked nose, that he might resemble the illustrious prince then on the throne.'

From the time employed in this great work, Dryden borrowed two months in the year 1695, which were consumed in translating Du Fresnoy's

questionable, that all the heroes of antiquity must submit, or Homer and Virgil be judged nonconformists. For my part, I account it one of the great felicities of my life to have lived in your age; but much greater, to have had access to your person, and to have been cherished and enlightened by *the influences and irradiations of so great a luminary*. For, I must confess, I never return from your Lordship's most charming and instructive conversation, but I am inspired with a new genius, and improved in all those sciences I ever coveted the knowledge of: I find myself not only a better poet, a better philosopher, but much more than these, a better Christian: your Lordship's *miraculous* wit, and intellectual powers, being the greatest argument that ever I could meet with, for the immateriality of the soul; *they being the highest exaltation of human nature*, and, under Divine authority, much more convincing to suspicious reason, than all the pedantick proofs of the most learnedly peevish disputants: so that, I hope, I shall be obliged to your Lordship, not only for my reputation in this world, but my future happiness in the next.

" Reflect then, my Lord, I beseech you, on your own sublime perfections, the profuseness of your favours, my powerful (though presumptuous) inclination to your person; and judge, if it be possible, for any other man

Latin Poem on **THE ART OF PAINTING**^a (to which he prefixed a very pleasing Preface, the work of twelve mornings); a task probably suggested by his friend Closterman the Painter, and Sir Godfrey Kneller, who were both active in procuring subscriptions to his Virgil; and in the end of the same year, on the death of Purcell, the celebrated Musician, he honoured his memory with an Ode. In the next year, I believe, he wrote the Life of Lucian, from regard to Mr. Moyle, (of whom he had made honourable mention in the

living to pay your Lordship so sincere and affectionate a veneration, as

“ My Lord,

“ Your Lordship's most devoted,

“ Obedient, and humble servant,

“ FRANCIS FANE.”

If this does not exhibit a perfect specimen of the true *celestial* style of Dedication, I know not where it can be found.

¹ Letter from Dryden to his son Charles, Sept. 3, 1697.

² Dryden, in this translation, which was published in June, 1695, (see London Gazette, N^o 3094.) having been led into some errors by De Piles, who states in his Preface that his French version was made at the author's request, and revised by him, they were corrected in the second edition in 1716, by Mr. Jervas, with the assistance, it is supposed, of his friend and scholar, Pope. The late Mr. Mason, in 1782, published a poetical translation of the same piece, which is now incorporated in the works of Sir Joshua Reynolds, with very valuable annotations by that great painter.

Parallel of Poetry and Painting,)' Sir Henry Shere⁴, and some other gentlemen, who were engaged in a

³ " This foregoing remark, which gives the reason why imitation pleases, was sent me by Mr. Walter Moyle, a most ingenious young gentleman, conversant in all the studies of humanity, much above his years. He had also furnished me, according to my request, with all the particular passages in Aristotle and Horace, which are used by them to explain the art of poetry by that of painting; which, if ever I have time to retouch this Essay, shall be inserted in their places."—So again, in the Life of Lucian: " The learning and judgment above his age, which every one observes in Mr. Moyle, are proofs of those abilities he shews in his country's service, where he was chose to serve it in the Senate, as his father had done."—Some further account of Mr. Moyle may be found in vol. iii. p. 382, n. 8.

⁴ In speaking of this gentleman in the notes on the Life of Polybius, and elsewhere, I have called him *Sheers*, following the ordinary corruption of the last age, into which even Lord Clarendon has fallen; that of adding the letter *s*, *ad libitum*, to the end of surnames. Thus Mr. *St. John*, afterwards Viscount Bolingbroke, appears among the Subscribers to our author's translation of Virgil, by the name of Henry St. Johns, Esq. But the following note by Dryden, (on a line in the fourth Georgick,) which contains a curious observation made by his friend, at the same time ascertains his true name:

" My most ingenious friend, Sir Henry *Shere*, has observed through a glass-hive, that the young prince of the bees, or heir presumptive of the crown, approaches the king's apartment with great reverence, and for three successive mornings demands permission to lead forth a colony of that year's bees. If his petition be granted,

translation of that author.' This Life, however, was not published till some years after his death.

The English Virgil, we have seen, was given to the publick in July, 1697; and such was the demand for it, that all the copies were dispersed in a very few months, and a second edition was sent to the press, which appeared in the following year.

Previous, however, to the review of his translation, he was solicited in the month of August, 1697, by the Stewards of the Anniversary Musical Festival, to write a second Ode, to be sung at the celebration of St. Cecilia's Day,—which has been represented as one of the latest productions of his Muse: but this statement is unquestionably erroneous; for it was written at this time, and published separately in folio, under the title of ALEX-

which he seems to make by humble hummings, the swarm arises under his conduct: if the answer be, *Le Roy s'avisera*, that is, if the old monarch think it not convenient for the publick good to part with so many of his subjects, the next morning the prince is found dead before the threshold of the palace."

Since the above was written, I have observed, that in a letter in the Museum, MSS. Sloan. 4059, he subscribes his name, *H. Shere*.

This translation, by several hands, was published by Samuel Briscoe, in three vols. 8vo. in 1711. It was announced by Motteux in his GENT. JOURN. in June, 1693; and in March, 1694, said to be extremely forward; but that the Life was not written till after 1695, is ascertained by the passage quoted above. (n. 3.) From the publisher's Dedication it should seem to have been written in 1695.

ANDER'S FEAST, OR THE POWER OF MUSICK,
in December, 1697.

The history of this nominal Patroness of Musick is involved in some obscurity, it not very clearly appearing, how she became entitled to this honour. She is supposed to have been born in the reign of the Emperor M. Aurelius Antoninus, and to have suffered martyrdom in that of Septimius Severus, in the beginning of the third century; and, according to the legend, she was a noble Roman lady of distinguished piety, who from her infancy had been bred in the Christian faith; notwithstanding which, she was married by her parents to a young Pagan nobleman, named Valerianus, who, on claiming the rights of a husband, was told by her, that she was visited nightly by an Angel, who was enamoured of her, and would destroy him, if he presumed to approach her. He replied, that he would desist, if he were permitted to behold his rival; and he should prove an Angel; but if he were a mere mortal, as he feared, he would put them both to death: to which Cecilia answered, that he should be indulged in what he desired, provided he became a convert to Christianity. To this requisition Valerianus agreed; and after having been baptized by Bishop Urban, (afterwards Pope Urban I.) repaired to his wife's chamber, where he found her at prayer, with the Angel by her side, in the form of a beautiful youth, cloathed with celestial brightness. The Angel had in his hand two crowns or wreaths, the one of lilies, the other of roses, which he had brought from Paradise: one of them he

presented to Cecilia, and the other to her husband; informing him at the same time, that, as a reward for his piety, whatever he asked should be granted him. Valerianus replied, that he had a brother named Tiburtius, whom he wished to be made partaker of the same grace which he had received. The Angel, having granted his request, told him, that they both should be crowned with martyrdom; and then vanished. They accordingly were put to death for their faith; but Cecilia was informed, that she should be spared, if she would offer sacrifice to Jupiter. Not choosing to preserve her life on such conditions, she suffered martyrdom, by being shut up in a dry bath, beneath which a large fire was made, for the purpose of slowly consuming her.⁶ Finding, however, that the fire had no effect, her tormentors put her to death.—Such is the Golden Legend of Jacobus Januensis; the foundation of Chaucer's *SECOND NONNES TALE*, which he has inserted among his other *Canterbury Tales*, but appears to have originally intended for a distinct work.⁷

In this legendary story we do not find any thing related, from which the veneration paid to

⁶ According to other accounts, she was thrown into scalding water. Fortunatus of Poitiers, who lived in the sixth century, says, she suffered martyrdom in Sicily.

⁷ Mr. Tyrwhitt observes, "that it is mentioned by Chaucer in his *LEGEND OF GOOD WOMEN*, (ver. 426.) under the title of "The Life of Seint Cecile;" and it still retains evident marks that it was not originally com-

this Saint by the votaries of musick may be supposed to have arisen. If, as Dryden and others seem to have thought,⁸ she had been the inventress of the organ, an instrument so happily

posed in the form of a Tale to be *spoken by the Nonne*.—The whole introduction is in the style of a person *writing*, and not of one *speaking*; . . . and in ver. 15530, the Relater, or rather writer, of the Tale, in all the MSS. (except one of middling authority) is called "unworthy son of Eve." CANT. TALES. iv. 180.

⁸ Thus Chaucer, in his Account of St. Cecilia (SECOND NONNES TALE):

"And while that the *organs* maden melodie,
"To GOD alone thus in hire hert song she."

After whom, our author, in his ALEXANDER'S FEAST:

"Thus, long ago,
"Ere heaving bellows learn'd to blow,
"While *organs* yet were mute,
"Timotheus, to his breathing flute
"And sounding lyre,
"Could swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft desire:
"At last divine Cecilia came,
"Inventress of the vocal frame," &c.

So, in his former Ode:

"But bright Cecilia rais'd the wonder higher,
"When to her *organ* vocal breath was given;
"An Angel heard,
"And straight appear'd,
"Mistaking earth for heaven."

Thus also, Congreve:

"The soft enervate lyre is drown'd
"In the deep *organ's* solemn sound:

adapted to religious worship, that circumstance might have entitled her to a place, though not to so extraordinary an elevation, among the improvers of

" In peals the breathing notes ascend the skies,

" Perpetual breath the swelling notes supplies ;

" And lasting as her name,

" *Who form'd the tuneful frame,*

" The immortal musick never dies."

Brady, Bishop, and Yalden, also concur in ascribing, in their Odes, the invention of this instrument to Cecilia. But her claim to it is extremely questionable ; for an instrument resembling the modern organ is supposed to have been invented before her time. The most ancient proof, however, of a pneumatick organ that Dr. Burney could find, is a Greek epigram in the *AUTHOLOGIA*, attributed to the Emperor Julian the Apostate, who flourished about the year 364. *HIST. OF MUSICK*, ii. 65. The Hydraulicon, or Water-Organ, is of much higher antiquity, being invented (according to Athenæus, iv. 174,) by Ctesibius, in the time of the second Ptolemy Evergetes, about thirty years before Christ. Of this instrument, however, the original idea was furnished by Plato ; who invented a night-clock, or water-clock, which told the hours by the sound of flutes, modulated by water.

The learned Dr. Powel leaves this question in doubt.

" All instruments of musick (says he) were by the Latins called *Organa*, Organs. But that which is more especially called by that name, makes a grave solemn musick, like the sober Dorick, and hath been very anciently used, with psalmodies, in divine service ; the inventor whereof was King David, *as some affirm.*" *HUMANE INDUSTRY*, 8vo. 1661, p. 108.—Milbourne, who never has any doubts, treats our author on this subject with his usual

the musical art : but this foundation fails, for the pneumattick organ is supposed to have been of still higher antiquity than this pious lady. There is, however, a tradition that she was a skilful musician, and that the Angel who visited her was drawn from the mansions of the blessed by the charms of her melody ; a circumstance to which Dryden has alluded in the conclusion of his Ode.* In conformity with this tradition, and that already mentioned, which attributes to her the in-

bippancy : " A man (says he) may be permitted to blunder in such things, who had never heard of Organs before St. Cecilia's time."

* So also Hughes in some verses to a Lady playing on the Organ, printed anonymously in Pemberton's Collection :

" When famed Cecilia on the Organ play'd,
 " And fill'd with moving sounds the tuneful frame,
 " Drawn by the charm to hear the sacred maid,
 " From heaven, 'tis said, a list'ning Angel came.

" Thus ancient legends would our faith abuse ;
 " In vain,—for were the bold tradition true,
 " While your harmonious touch that charm renews,
 " Again the Seraph would appear to you !"

Addison, in his shorter Ode for St. Cecilia's day, gives a new turn to this ancient tradition :

" Such were the tuneful notes that hung
 " On bright Cecilia's charming tongue ;
 " Notes that sacred hearts inspired,
 " And with religious ardour fired :
 " The love-sick youth, that long suppress'd
 " The smother'd passion in his breast,

vention of the instrument appropriated to sacred musick, Raffaele in one of his finest pictures, in the church of *S. Giovanni in monte* at Bologna, has represented Cecilia playing on a regal or portable organ.* By others she is depicted singing and playing on the harp.

Bede relates in his Ecclesiastical History,* that, in the church dedicated to Cecilia at Rome, (which is built on the spot where her house formerly stood;) Vilbrord, an Englishman, was ordained Archbishop of Friesland by Pope Sergius, in 696; and it appears from a Gallican Missal quoted by Mabillon, (as is observed by that very elegant and

“ No sooner heard the warbling dame,

“ But, by the sacred influence turn'd,

“ He felt a new diviner flame,

“ And with devotion burn'd.

“ With ravish'd soul, and looks amaz'd,

“ Upon her beauteous face he gaz'd,

“ Nor made his amorous complaint;

“ In vain her eyes his heart had charm'd,

“ Her heavenly voice her eyes disarm'd,

“ And chang'd the lover to a saint.”

† In the vault under St. Paul's Cathedral is a marble monument, erected in honour of Jane, the only daughter of Sir Christopher Wren; who died in 1702, at the age of 26. She is represented on a bas-relief, in the character of St. Cecilia playing on an Organ, an Angel sustaining her book;—in allusion to her having been not only *pia*, *benevola*, *domisida*, (as the inscription informs us she was,) but also *arte musica peritissima*.

* Lib. v. c. xii. Bedæ Opera, tom. iii. p. 171. Basil.
1562.

judicious historian, Dr. Burney,) that the musical festival in honour of this saint was celebrated before the time of Charlemagne, who was born in 743. Her body having been found at Rome among other relicks, in the year 1595, there was a splendid festival on that occasion, of which a full account is given by Baronius; and at the beginning of the present century, Cardinal Ottoboni celebrated St. Cecilia's Day by a great congress of Musicians, and by various compositions expressly written and composed for the purpose.*

When this zeal for the Musical Patroness manifested itself in England, by annual performances on the 22d of November, the day of her birth, has hitherto been undetermined. With the aid, however, of the following notices, it may be nearly ascertained. That musick was in a very low state in this country, even in the middle of the reign of Charles the Second, appears from the humble efforts of John Banister, leader of the King's Band,* and the first Englishman who distinguished himself by his performance on the violin. He seems also to have been the first person who

* In the DRAMMATURGIA of Leoni Allacci (as Dr. Burney informs me,) are recorded thirteen dramas, (tragedies and oratorios,) of which this female saint is the heroine.

* His salary is ascertained by the following article in the account of the Treasurer of the Chamber in 1660: "John Banister, violin, at 20*s.* *per diem*, and £.16. 8. 6. for his livery." Matthew Lock, the celebrated composer, had the same salary; viz. £.46. 10. 10. *per ann.*

attempted (about the year 1672,) any thing like a publick concert in London, of which the following curious account was extracted by Dr. Burney from Mr. North's manuscript *Memoirs of Musick* :

" Banister, having procured a large room in White Fryers, near the Temple back-gate, and erected an elevated box or gallery for the musicians, whose modesty required curtains,* the rest of the room was filled with seats and small tables, ale-house fashion. One shilling, which was the price of admission, entitled the audience to call for what they pleased. There was very good musick ; for Banister found means to procure the best hands in London, and some voices to assist him. And there wanted no variety, for Banister, besides playing on the violin, did wonders on the flageolet to a thro' base, and several other masters likewise played solos."

* Previous to the Restoration, the musicians at the theatres, who sat in an upper side box, were concealed by curtains from the audience.

¹ *HIST. OF MUSICK*, iii. 470.—Dr. Burney adds, " Banister's Concerts were advertised in the London Gazette of the times ; and in N^o 748, for Dec. 30, 1672, there is the following advertisement : " These are to give notice, that at Mr. John Banister's house, now called the Musick-School, over-against the George Tavern in White Fryers, this present Monday, will be Musick performed by excellent masters, beginning precisely at four of the clock in the afternoon, and every afternoon for the future, precisely at the same hour."—There are other advertisements from Banister, of the same kind, in 1674, 1676, and 1678. In that for December 11th, 1676, his

Not long after Banister's death, about the year 1680, the principal masters of musick in London erected and fitted up a room for concerts in Villiers-street, York-Buildings, where the best compositions and performers of the time attracted a numerous and polite audience;⁴ and two years afterwards a Musical Society of Gentlemen' ap-

musical performance is said to be at the *Academy* in Little Lincoln's Inn Fields; where it was "to begin with a *parley* of instruments, composed by Mr. Banister, and performed by eminent masters."

The musical club or private concert of Thomas Britton, the celebrated small-coal man, commenced, under the patronage of Sir Roger L'Estrange, and other gentlemen, in 1678.—Lord Orford (*ANECDOTES OF PAINTING*, iii. 253, 8vo.) from the information of a son of Woolaston the painter, who were both members of Britton's musick-club, says, that "the subscription to this concert was but *ten shillings* a year: Britton found the instruments, and they had coffee at a penny a dish:" but Sir John Hawkins quotes a memorandum from the manuscript diary of Mr. Thomas Rowe, by which it appears that the company were admitted *gratis*. The place appropriated to these concerts does not give us a very high idea of the state of musick at this period; for to the musick-room, which was so low that a tall man could scarcely stand in it upright, the company ascended by stairs on the outside of the house!

⁴ Burney's *HIST. OF MUSICK*, *ubi supra*.

⁵ On the authority of Jacob, it might be supposed that there existed in London such a society some years before; for in his *POETICAL REGISTER*, 8vo. 1719, p. 304, in a list of anonymous plays he enumerates—"ARIADNE, or the Marriage of Bacchus, an Opera; translated from the

pears to have been formed in the Metropolis, who resolved annually to commemorate their pious

French, and presented by THE ACADEMY OF MUSICK at the Theatre Royal in Covent-Garden, 1674." Dr. Burney with good reason doubted the existence of any *English* Academy of Musick, at this period; and assuredly none such existed, as will appear by exhibiting the full title of this opera, which now lies before me. It was set to musick, not, as has been supposed, by Cambert, who had been Master of the King's Band, and probably was then dead, but by Grabu, or Grabut, (for the name is written both ways,) who afterwards was employed to furnish the musick of Dryden's ALBION AND ALBANIUS.—The full title is as follows:

"ARIADNE, or the Marriage of Bacchus, an Opera; or a Vocal Representation, first composed by Monsieur P. P. [Pierre Perrin,] now put into musick by Monsieur Grabut, *Master of his Majesties Musick*, and acted by the ROYAL Academy of Musick, at the Theatre Royal in Covent-Garden. In the Savoy: Printed by Tho. Newcombe, 1674."

The word *Royal*, which Jacob has omitted, as well as the Dedication to the King, shew, that this Academy was nothing more than the principal musicians employed in his Majesty's band, who were chiefly foreigners: but how with propriety they could be said to have *acted* this opera, M. Grabu himself would, I believe, have found it very difficult to explain.—The following passages in the Dedication will at once shew what kind of Musical Academy this was:

"But, Sir, - - - - your vast mind was not yet fully satisfied in having by your invincible force made England triumph over her fierce and audacious enemies, bringing them, in spite of their obstinacy, to beg peace at your

patroness by a publick performance of vocal and instrumental musick. That such an Association

royal hands, and by that happy peace filled the hearts of your people with joy and satisfaction: you would compleat the splendour and magnificence of your imperial seat, by establishing within her stately walls your ACADEMY OF OPERAS, the fairest and most charming of all publick shews: you have made the queen of cities to become also the center, the source of love, pleasures, and gallantry. Your Majesty will doubtless find these first representations of *your* opera very defective; but, Sir, it dares flatter itself with hopes that you will pardon its faults, and consider that the Academy that executes the same, is yet an infant, a new-born beauty, whose features and lineaments are scarce come to their shape and proportion; but cannot fail of growing to perfection in her due time and age, provided you deign own her for your creature, and afford her your royal care and protection. These gracious favours, Sir, she humbly, and with a most profound respect and veneration begs at your royal hands, ... as being your Majesties most humble and most obedient, and most faithful subjects and servants,

"Your Royal Academy of Musick."

But how, it may be said, could this opera have been performed at the theatre in *Covent-Garden*, which was not then built? Shadwell's opera of *PSYCHE* was at this time performing at the *Duke's Theatre* in *Dorset-Garden*; for Downes says, it was first produced in February, 1673-4. To oppose it, *ARIADNE* was exhibited at the King's Theatre in *Drury-Lane*, which had been burnt down, and after its rebuilding, was opened March 26, 1674. The King's Theatre, having its principal door in *Bridges-street*, and another in *Little Russel-street*, is in some other old plays beside *ARIADNE*, called the Theatre in

existed about that time, we learn from a publication of the last age, entitled "A Musical Entertainment performed November 22, 1683, on St. Cecilia's day, printed in score by John Playford, with a Dedication⁶ to the Gentlemen of THE MUSICAL SOCIETY, and particularly the Stewards,

Covent-Garden. "This play," says Shadwell, speaking of THE MISER, in 1678, "was the last play that was acted at the King's Theatre in *Covent-Garden*, before the fatal fire there:"—and in the present century, LOVE THE LEVELLER, a comedy, was printed in 1704, as "acted at the Theatre-Royal in Bridges-street, *Covent-Garden*."

⁶ This piece is so rare, that I have not discovered a copy of it any where, except in the Musical Collection of Mr. Goodson, in the library of Christ-Church in Oxford. Purcell's Dedication is as follows :

"To the Gentlemen of the Musical Society, and
 " particularly to the Stewards for the year ensuing,
 " William Bridgman, Esq. Nicholas Staggin,
 " Doctor in Musick, Gilbert Dolben, Esq. and
 " Mr. Francis Forcer.

" Gentlemen;

" Your kind approbation and benign reception of the performance of these musical compositions on St. Cecilia's day, by way of gratitude claim this Dedication; which likewise furnishes the author with an opportunity of letting the world know the obligations he lies under to you, and that he is, to all lovers of musick,

" A real friend and servant,

" HENRY PURCELL."

William Bridgman was probably the gentleman mentioned by Mr. North, in his Manuscript Memoirs of Musick, (quoted by Dr. Burney, iii. 514.) among the dilettanti,

by Henry Purcell, Composer of Musick;" which furnishes the earliest notice of the celebration of this festival in England, that I have met with.

At that period, few of the taverns of the metropolis affording accommodation for very large assemblies, and none of them being furnished with such spacious kitchens as the edifices appropriated to the meetings and entertainments of the various Companies of the Corporation of London, it was customary for the principal gentlemen of several of the counties of England to have their annual dinners at some one of the publick halls; generally either at

who patronized Nicola Matteis:—" Mr. Bridgman, the under-secretary, who accompanied well on the harpsichord." He was Secretary to the Ecclesiastical Commission at its first opening in 1686, and at the same time was sworn Clerk of the Privy Council.—Neither this gentleman, nor our author's friend, Mr. Gilbert Dolben, is answerable for accepting so miserable a song as that which Purcell decorated by his notes; for we here find, they were not the Stewards of the year 1683.

Nicholas Staggins, who attained to the degree of Doctor in Musick in 1664, was composer to Charles II. and Master of the band of musick to William III. He composed the musick for a song in our author's MARRIAGE A-LA-MODE, beginning with the words, — " Whilst Alexis," &c. He died in 1698; and was succeeded, as Master of the King's band, by John Eccles.

' The principal gentlemen of Yorkshire, Wiltshire, Buckinghamshire, Dorsetshire, Cheshire, and some other counties, at this time annually dined together in London. Previous to their anniversary feast, they generally went to church, and heard a sermon. The gentlemen bred at

that belonging to the Merchant Taylors in Thread-needle-street, or 'at Stationers' Hall. The latter having been consumed by the fire of London, was rebuilt, and the new edifice was completed in 1674.*

Eton and at the Charter-House, from about the year 1684, also annually met and dined together for several years.

The sum at first paid for the use of Stationers' Hall is ascertained by the following entry in the Wardens' account, from the 1st of July 1683, to the 24th of July, 1684:

" Feasts and	}	Received for the Hall, of Buck-			
Funerals.		inghamshire Stewards. . . .	£. 1	10	0
		Received for the Hall, burying			
		Mr. Warren	£. 1	0	0
		Received for the Hall, for Eaton			
		Feast	£. 1	10	0"

The hire of the Hall, however, for both feasts and funerals, afterwards rose to two pounds.—Of the County Meetings, and those of the Eton and Charter-House scholars, here and at Merchant Taylors' Hall, various notices are found in the London Gazette, between 1699 and 1700.

The Stationers' Hall was also let for other purposes. Thus, in 1698, is the following entry:

" Received of Mr. Leigh, for the use of the			
Hall, for his <i>Lottery</i>	£. 2	0	0
" Received for <i>dancing</i>	£. 2	0	0

In Jan. 1701-2, the use of the Hall was allowed to Mr. Cavendish Weedon, "for the performance of divine musick in it twice a week, for a year, at three guineas a week, with Officers' fees." G. 66. (b.)

* Sir John Hawkins says, (HIST. OF MUSICK, iv. 302.) that "the lovers of musick residing in this metropolis

A few years afterwards, as appears from the records of the company, they frequently let out their Hall for various purposes : sometimes for concerts ; sometimes for the convivial meetings above-mentioned ; and at others, for the solemn pomp of funerals, when any person wished to pay more than ordinary respect to a deceased friend or relation. On such occasions the corpse was conveyed from the house of the deceased to the Hall,¹ which was sometimes hung with black baize ; whence it was carried to the place of interment, accompanied by a numerous train of attendants. Not long afterwards the business of an Undertaker, which had before been unknown, became a common occupation.'

'The MUSICAL SOCIETY, however, do not ap-

had a solemn annual feast at Stationers' Hall, on the 22d day of November, being the anniversary of the *martyrdom* of St. Cecilia, *from the time of rebuilding that edifice after the fire of London.*" But unquestionably this statement is erroneous ; for if the Hall had been let for this purpose from the time it was rebuilt, the sums received between that period and 1684, would have been mentioned in the Wardens' Accounts.—The 22d of Nov. was the birth-day of St. Cecilia, (see Bede's EPHEMERIS, Opera, vol. i. p. 262. Basil. 1563.) but not, I believe, that of her martyrdom.

¹ This practice continued to the beginning of the present century ; for in the Wardens' Account for the year 1709, I found—" Oct. 29. Received for the use of the Hall, for Dr. Daffy's funeral, £. 2 0 0."

¹ Previous to the Restoration, the funerals of all distinguished persons were conducted by the College of Heralds.

pear to have chosen Stationers' Hall for their first celebration of St. Cecilia's day; for no mention of it occurs in the Account of the Wardens of that company, for the year 1683; nor have I been able to discover where they then assembled.* But in the following year I find an entry, which ascer-

* The first musical entertainment in honour of St. Cecilia, was probably performed at the concert-room in York-Buildings; which proving perhaps too small for the company then assembled, Stationers' Hall was fixed upon for the meeting of the ensuing year.

Sir John Hawkins loosely states, (*HIST. OF MUSICK*, iv. 504) that at the celebration of this festival "not only the most eminent masters in the science contributed their performance, but the gentlemen of the King's chapel and of the choirs of St. Paul's and Westminster lent their assistance, and the festival was *announced in the London Gazette*:" from which it might be presumed, that it was regularly thus announced from its commencement; and if this had been the case, we should not have any difficulty in ascertaining either the time or place of the first performance. But the truth is, that the first notice of this solemnity which is found in the *London Gazette*, occurs in No. 2924, for Monday, November 20, 1693, and is as follows:

"The Anniversary Feast of the Society of Gentlemen, lovers of musick, will be kept at Stationers' Hall, on Wednesday the 22th inst. Tickets are delivered at Mr. Richard Hoare's, goldsmith, at the Golden Bottle in Fleet-street, and at Mr. Jer. Marlow's, goldsmith, at the Spread Eagle in Lombard-street."

From 1693 to 1700, this festival was regularly announced in the *London Gazette*. In 1696 the feast was advertised for *Monday* the twenty-third of November, "being the *sequel* of St. Cecilia's day;" and the tickets were

tains the festival of 1684 to have been celebrated at the Stationers' Hall ;' and for near twenty years

delivered at Mr. Richard Glover's, at the Castle Tavern in Fleet-street. In 1699 they were delivered at the same place, at *Ozinda's* Chocolate-House near St. James's Gate, and at Garraway's Coffee-House in Exchange-Alley.

' In the Wardens' Account from the fifth day of July, 1684, to the 24th day of July, 1685, is the following entry, under the general head of CHARGE :

" Received, the 23th of November, 1684, for
the Musick Feast kept in the Hall . . £. 2 0 0

A similar entry occurs in each year from 1684 to 1700 inclusive, excepting the years 1686, 1688, 1689, and 1697. In 1698 Mr. Glover paid for that and the preceding year.

The price paid by the Stewards of this feast for the use of the Hall, till 1694, was only two pounds. Probably in 1693, some damage had been done by the scaffolding employed for the accommodation of the company ; for in that year, as appears from one of the Company's books, F. 194, (a) an order was made, that " in consideration of the damage that may be done to the Hall at the next St. Cecilia's feast, by setting up scaffolding, and fixing tables and benches, the Hall shall not be let for that occasion under £. 5 0 0." The Court of Assistants, however, appears to have been afterwards contented with a less sum ; for, both in 1694 and 1695, no more than *four* pounds were paid. At the performance of our author's celebrated Ode, the price was raised to five pounds ; which sum was also paid in each of the two following years. In 1698, an order was made that " the Hall should be let to the Stewards of St. Cecilia's feast for five pounds, they agreeing to make good all damage that may happen to it or any room adjoining." G. 16. (a.) In 1700 the sum of six guineas was paid for the use of the Hall.

afterwards, (with a few intermissions,) a musical entertainment, in honour of this female saint, was annually there performed.

For the regulation of this meeting originally four Stewards were appointed, of whom one was a professor of musick ; but afterwards the number of Stewards was increased to six, two of whom were always musicians.

Among the collectors of engraved portraits it has long been a practice, when they happen to be possessed of a very fine impression of some rare print, to place beside it one of a very inferior quality, taken from the plate in its most imperfect state. With a similar view, one or two of the earliest songs produced in honour of Cecilia, may be happily contrasted with those of our author, and perused with some advantage.

The first Ode to which this celebration gave rise had the good fortune to be set to musick by Purcell, to whom the unknown author is indebted for its preservation ; for the following verses are, I believe, no where to be found, except in the Entertainment published by that composer. The most rigid critick, therefore, must allow them the *merit* of being rare." "Welcome," says the anonymous songster,

"Welcome to all the pleasures that delight

"Of every sense the grateful appetite !

"Hail, great Assembly of Apollo's race !

"Hail to this happy place ;

"This Musical Assembly, *that* seems to be

"The Ark of universal harmony !

- " Here the deities approve
- " (The God of Musick and of Love)
- " All the talents they have lent you,
- " All the blessings they have sent you ;
- " Pleas'd to see what they bestow
- " Live and thrive so well below ;
- " While joys celestial their bright souls invade,
- " To find what great improvement you have made.
- " Then lift up your voices, those organs of nature,
- " Those charms to the troubled and amorous creatur
- " The Power shall divert us a pleasanter way ;
- " For Sorrow and Grief
- " Find from musick relief,
- " And Love its soft charms must obey.
- " Beauty, thou *scene* of love,
- " And Virtue, thou innocent fire,
- " Made by the Powers above
- " To temper the heat of desire ;
- " Musick, that fancy employs
- " In raptures of innocent flame,
- " We offer with lute and with voice
- " To Cecilia's, Cecilia's bright name :
- " In a consort of voices, while instruments play,
- " With musick we celebrate this holiday ;
- " In a consort of voices we'll sing—*To Cecilia !*"

In such miserable strains were the Stewards of the first Cecilian festival contented to pay their homage to their pious Patroness. On the 22d November in the next year, was sung an Ode of very little merit, set to musick by Dr. Blow, Purcell's master, and written by Oldham, who died nearly a year before. Nahum Tate was the Pindar

1685.⁴ In 1686 there does not appear to have been any performance. Dryden, in 1687, pro-

⁴ Tate's Ode being short, and not having been reprinted, I believe, in any of the MISCELLANIES, I shall subjoin it, as a *companion* to that of 1683. To do him justice, however, his song must be acknowledged to be less exceptionable than his *great original*, and may aspire to the praise of a tolerable Namby-Pamby. It occupies one side of a single half-sheet, and appears to have been dispersed *gratis* :

- " Tune the viol, touch the lute,
- " Wake the harp, inspire the flute,
- " Call the jolly swains away,
- " Love and Musick reign to-day.
- " Let your kids and lambkins rove,
- " Let them sport or feed at will,
- " Grace the vale, or climb the hill ;
- " Let them feed, or let them love :
- " Let them love, or let them stray,
- " Let them feed, or let them play ;
- " Neglect them or guide them,
- " No harm shall betide them,
- " On bright Cecilia, bright Cecilia's day.
- " Thus the nymphs and jolly swains,
- " Kindly mingled on the plains,
- " In delightful measure move,
- " Full of joy, and full of love ;
- " With their cheerful roundelay
- " Celebrate Cecilia's day,
- " While Angels join in consort from above.
- " What charms can musick not impart,
- " That through the ear finds passage to the heart !

duced his first Ode, of which the composer was Giovanni Baptista Draghi, a celebrated Italian

- " In vain the Muse indites the lover's tale ;
- " In vain his doleful words declare
- " His passion to the cruel fair :
- " 'Tis musick only makes his song prevail.
- " This only can her scorn controul ;
- " In vain do wit and sense combine,
- " Without this art, to make our numbers shine ;
- " Words are the body, musick is the soul.
- " Call the jolly swains away,
- " To celebrate Cecilia's day.
- " Rouse the viol, wake the lyre,
- " To sing her praise, who did our art inspire :
- " Let victorious heroes stay,—
- " At leisure we will do them right ;
- " To our own art we consecrate this day,
- " And musick best can musick's power recite."

' In the Preface to *PSYCHE*, 1675, Shadwell says, that " all the instrumental musick of that opera, not mingled with vocal, was composed by that great master, Gio. Baptista Draghi, Master of the Italian musick to the King."

He is said by Mr. Wanley, Lord Oxford's librarian, (Catalogue of Harleian MSS. 1872, art. 80.) to have been musick-master to Queen Anne ; probably previous to her marriage, in 1683, to Prince George of Denmark. He was also organist to Catharine, the Queen Dowager, during her residence at Somerset-House ; where she had an ecclesiastical establishment from the time of the King's death, till she left England in March, 1698. He was living in 1705, when he composed some part of the musick of D'Urfey's opera, called *THE WONDERS OF THE SUN* ; in which a song sung by *HOSPITALITY*, in the character of a *Dame of Honour*, and set by Draghi, was much admired. As a

master, who is supposed to have come into England in 1673, in the train of Mary of Este, Princess of Modena, and consort of James the Second; and assisted Lock in composing the musick of Shadwell's opera of *PSYCHE*.—From that time to the year 1703, St. Cecilia was honoured by an annual Musical Entertainment, with the exception of three years, 1688, 1689, and 1702. The Prince of Orange, with his army, having landed at Torbay on the 5th of November, 1688, the confusion of the time may easily account for the omission in that year: and in the years 1689 and 1702, there may have been musical performances, though they have eluded my researches.

Of the Odes written for this festival, of which I shall subjoin as accurate a list as I have been able to form,⁶ many are yet extant. Among those who contended with Dryden in celebrating Ce-

composer of musick, he was generally called in the last age, Signior *Baptist*.

Dryden's first Ode for St. Cecilia was again set to musick by Handel, and performed at the theatre in Lincoln's-Inn Fields, on St. Cecilia's day, November 22d, 1739, after ALEXANDER'S FEAST.

⁶ The following list contains, I believe, all the Odes for St. Cecilia's day, hitherto discovered :

AUTHORS.	COMPOSERS.
1683. Unknown.	HENRY PURCELL.
1684. OLDHAM.	Dr. JOHN BLOW.
1685. TATE.	Mr. Wm. TURNER.
1686. ———	—————

There does not appear to have been any musical

cilia, are found some eminent, and several obscure, poets: Oldham and Tate, who have been already mentioned; Shadwell, Brady, Parsons, D'Urfey, Bishop, Wesley, Yalden, Addison, Congreve,

AUTHORS.

COMPOSERS.

performance in honour of St. Cecilia, in this year.— In "Poems on several occasions, by Thomas Fletcher, B. A. Fellow of New College, in Oxford," 8vo. 1692, I find "an Ode on the Feast of St. Cecilia, 1686;" but the author being then extremely young, and a student at Oxford, it probably was not performed in London. It might perhaps have been sung at Oxford.

1687. DRYDEN. GIO. BAPT. DRAGHI.

1688. ———, No performance. . . . ———

1689. ———. No performance. . . . ———

1690. SHADWELL. ROBERT KING.

His Ode is reprinted in Dryden's MISCELLANIES, fourth edit. 1716. vol. iv. p. 93.

1691. D'URFEY. Dr. BLOW.

His Ode was printed in folio at the time; as were, I believe, all the other Songs for St. Cecilia's day. I know not whether it has been reprinted.

1692. NICHOLAS BRADY; HENRY PURCELL.

then M. A. Printed in the GENTLEMAN'S JOURNAL for November, 1692, p. 93. The author of that Miscellany says, "it was admirably set to musick by Mr. Henry Purcell, and performed twice with universal applause, and particularly the second stanza, which was sung with incredible graces by Mr. Purcell himself."—Dr. Burney observes, (HIST. OF MUSICK, iii. 499.) that "Purcell's song on St. Cecilia's day, 1692, has several passages," of which

Hughes, and Pope. The Odes of Yalden and Addison, however, and probably Wesley, were

AUTHORS.

COMPOSERS.

Handel frequently made use, many years after, in his *ALLEGRO* and *PENSEROSO*."

A Song in honour of St. Cecilia, was, I believe, this year sung at Oxford, written by Addison, beginning with the words—" Cecilia, whose exalted hymns." It was printed in Dryden's *FOURTH MISCELLANY*, 8vo. 1694; and is in Tickell's edition of Addison's works. This Song was at a subsequent period again set to musick by M. C. Festing.

1693. THEOPHILUS PARSONS. . . . GODFREY FINGER.

Printed in the *GENTLEMAN'S JOURNAL* for Nov. 1693, p. 377. Parsons has a paper of verses prefixed to *CLEOMENES*, which are highly commended by our author.

At Oxford this year was sung an Ode written by Thomas Yalden. Printed in Dryden's *FOURTH MISCELLANY*, 8vo. 1694.

1694. Unknown. ————

An Ode for St. Cecilia's day, which is said to have been written *some time since* by Samuel Wesley, [author of the *Life of Christ*,] and *not to have been seen in town*, is printed in the *GENT. JOURNAL* for May, 1694.

1695. Unknown. ————

1696. Unknown. NICOLA MATTEIS.

1697. DRYDEN. JEREMIAH CLARKE.

1698. Perhaps THO. BISHOP; DANIEL PURCELL.

whose Ode for St. Cecilia, beginning with the words—" Cecilia, charming saint, we raise"—is reprinted in Nichols's *Select Collection of Poems*,

sung at Oxford, that University vying with London in the homage paid to the musical Patroness.

AUTHORS.

COMPOSERS.

iv. 28. The composer is ascertained by an advertisement, which will be inserted in a subsequent page.

1699. Unknown.

The Ode, however, sung this year, beginning with the words—"Blest Cecilia, charming maid," is extant in Dryden's *SIXTH MISCELLANY*, 8vo. 1709, p. 289; but the composer is not mentioned.—At Oxford this year was sung an Ode written by Addison, beginning with the words—"Prepare the hallow'd strain, my Muse."

1700. D'URFEY. Dr. BLOW.

The performance of this year is ascertained by the following advertisement in a newspaper called *THE POSTBOY*, from Nov. 19 to Nov. 21, 1700: "There is now published the Ode for St. Cecilia, set to musick by Dr. John Blow; the words made by Mr. D'Urfev. Printed for H. Playford, &c. price 2d." And in *THE POSTMAN*, Nov. 23, 1700, we find—"Yesterday St. Cecilia's feast was kept at Stationers' Hall, when there was a very fine entertainment of musick, both there and at St. Bride's church."

1701. CONGREVE. JOHN ECCLES.

1702. Unknown.

1703. HUGHES.

In Hughes' Works, published by Duncombe in 1735, it is not said by whom this Ode was set to musick. Hughes was himself a musician, and perhaps was the composer. If that was not the case, it was probably set by either Dr. Pepusch or Mr. Galliard. It is expressly said to have been performed at

Of this Annual Festival the following account is given by a friend of our author:

"The 22d of November, being St. Cecilia's day, is observed throughout all Europe by the

AUTHORS.

COMPOSERS.

Stationers' Hall; yet neither in the Wardens' Account of that year, nor any following year, is it noticed.

1708. POPE.

It does not appear that Pope's Ode was set to musick in 1708.

An Ode was performed at Oxford in 1707, set to musick by Daniel Purcell; and another in 1708, set by Blow; and both performed at St. Mary Hall.

From the total silence of the newspapers concerning this festival after 1703, it may be presumed, that after that time her anniversary ceased to be regularly celebrated at Stationers' Hall by "the Lovers of Musick," in the same manner in which it had been solemnized for twenty years. That the practice of writing an Ode for the day was discontinued in 1711, is ascertained by the following Advertisement in THE SPECTATOR, (original edition) No. 229; Thursday, Nov. 22:

"For the benefit of Mr. Anthony Young, Organist of St. Clement's-Danes, at Stationers' Hall, this present Thursday, the 22d instant, being St. Cecilia's day, will be performed a *Consort* of vocal and instrumental musick, most of which will be entirely new; and Mr. Leveridge sings that celebrated song, beginning at—*Genius of England*. Tickets at 5s. each," &c.

On St. Cecilia's day, 1723, was performed at the Theatre in Lincoln's-Inn Fields, "an Entertainment of Musick, called THE UNION OF THE THREE SISTER ARTS;" set to musick by Dr. Pepusch. In this Enter-

lovers of musick. In Italy, Germany, France, and other countries, prizes are distributed on that day, in some of the most considerable towns, to such as make the best anthem in her praise. - - -

On that day, or the next, when it falls on a Sunday, - - - most of the lovers of musick, whereof many are persons of the first rank, meet at Stationers' Hall in London, not through a principle of superstition, but to propagate the advancement of that divine science. A splendid entertainment is provided, and before it is always a performance of

tainment (which more nearly resembles the performances in foreign countries in honour of this saint, than any of the Musick-Odes at Stationers' Hall,) Cecilia was represented by Mrs. Chambers, Homer by Mr. Leveridge, and Apelles by Mr. Le Gare.

In 1730, Pope's Ode was set to musick by Dr. Greene, as an exercise on taking his degree of Doctor of Musick, in the University of Cambridge. On this occasion, some alterations were made in it, and a new stanza added by Pope.—Some time between that year and 1740, an Ode for St. Cecilia's day, written (as I learn from a MS. note) by Mr. Vidal, one of the ushers of Westminster School, and set to musick by Mr. Boyce, was performed by the Academy of Musick, in the great room called the Apollo, in the Devil Tavern. Another Ode, written by Mr. John Lockman, and set also by Boyce, was performed by the same Academy, within the period above mentioned: they were both printed in 8vo. in 1740, in a volume entitled "A Miscellany of Lyrick Poems," &c. and are the latest instances which I have found, of any *new* musical performance in honour of Cecilia. Dryden's first Ode, as has been already mentioned, was performed at the theatre in Lincoln's-Inn Fields, November 22, 1739.

musick by the best voices and hands in town : the words, which are always in the patronesses praise, are set by some of the greatest masters. This year [1691] Dr. John Blow, that famous musician, composed the musick ; and Mr. D'Urfey, whose skill in things of that nature is well known, made the words. Six Stewards are chosen for each ensuing year ; four of which are either persons of quality or gentlemen of note, and the two last either gentlemen of their Majesties' musick, or some of the chief masters in town. - - - - This feast is one of the genteelest in the world : there are no formalities nor gatherings, as at others, and the appearance there is always very splendid. Whilst the company is at table, the hautboys and trumpets play successively."¹

Previous to the performance of the Ode written

¹ GENT. JOURNAL for January 1698, p. 6. Motteux adds, " that Mr. Showers [Shore] hath taught the latter of late years to sound with all the softness imaginable ; they play'd us some flat tunes made by Mr. Finger, with a general applause, it being a thing formerly thought impossible upon an instrument designed for a sharp key."

Mathias Shore, the person here spoken of, was Sergeant Trumpeter in the reign of William III. and father of Colley Ciber's wife, who was a scholar of Purcell, and won her husband's heart by singing and playing on the harpsichord. Purcell, being connected with this family, and a great admirer of her brother John Shore's performance on the trumpet, took every opportunity (says Dr. Burney) of introducing that martial and field instrument, even when the subject of the poetry was pacifick.

for the day, a sermon was preached by some eminent divine at St. Bride's church;⁸ and an anthem, or some other piece of sacred musick, composed for the occasion, was performed by the gentlemen of his Majesty's chapel and of the choirs of Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's, who regularly attended for this purpose; after which the company repaired to Stationers' Hall. Thus, in the King's manuscript collection of Purcell's Odes and Miscellaneous Compositions, we find "A Latin song made upon St. Cecilia, whose day

⁸ On the 22d of November, 1693, the sermon was preached by Dr. Battell, Sub-Dean of their Majesties' Chapel-Royal, and published in quarto in the following month, at the request of the Stewards of St. Cecilia's feast, under the title of "The lawfulness and expediency of Church Musick, a Sermon preached at St. Bride's, at the Anniversary Meeting of Gentlemen, lovers of musick." Dr. Hickman published a Sermon preached on the same occasion in 1695. In 1697, Nicholas Brady, M. A. who had furnished the Ode in 1692, and afterwards translated Virgil, was the preacher, and printed his Sermon at the request of the Stewards, under the title of "Church Musick vindicated." I have been informed, there is also in print a sermon preached on St. Cecilia's day, by Dr. Holder; but I do not know its date. In the London Gazette, N° 1243, Thursday, Dec. 10, 1696, notice is given of the publication of a Sermon "preached at Christ-Church, Oxford, November 27th, 1696, upon occasion of the Anniversary Meeting of the Lovers of Musick on St. Cecilia's day, by S. Esturk, [Estwick,] B. D. and Chaplain of Christ-Church." The meeting in London, however, in 1696, was on the 23d of Nov.

is commemorated yearly by all musicians : ‘ *Laudate Ceciliam*,’ &c. It is set for three voices, and is dated 1683.⁹ That this was only a prelude, and not the principal performance of that year, is ascertained by “the Musical Entertainment” of the same composer, already mentioned. In like manner we shall find ALEXANDER’S FEAST preceded by an anthem ; and it appears from a manuscript title to a printed copy of Purcell’s *TE DEUM* and *JUBILATE*, in the library of Christ-Church in Oxford, that this celebrated composition, which was adapted for voices and instruments, was made for St. Cecilia’s day, 1694 :¹ on which occasion, as in former years, an Ode was afterwards sung, set to musick probably by the same composer.—I have only to add, that the ingenious writer who has ascertained the true date and occasion of Purcell’s *TE DEUM*, observes to me, that in his younger days the lovers of harmony used not only to celebrate this festival in the country, as well as in London, but even the *octave* of the day ; as a double testimony of reverence for the saint and the most perfect concord in musick.

Scarcely had our author delivered his Virgil to the publick, when he was solicited by the Stewards

⁹ Communicated by Dr. Burney.

¹ Purcell’s *TE DEUM* and *JUBILATE* have been erroneously thought to have been originally composed for the Annual Feast of the Sons of the Clergy.

of St. Cecilia's feast to furnish them with a second Ode on the same subject: a request which gave rise to the finest composition of this kind in the English language; of which he thus speaks in a letter written to his son early in Sept. 1697: - - -

"In the mean time I am writing a song for St. Cecilia's feast; who, you know, is the patroness of musick. This is troublesome, and no way beneficial; but I could not deny the Stewards, who came in a body to my house to desire that kindness, one of them being Mr. Bridgeman,¹ whose parents are your mother's friends."

Concerning the occasion and manner of writing this unrivalled Ode, the following story has been told, on the authority of the late Mr. Richard Berenger:²

"Mr. St. John, afterwards Lord Bolingbroke, happening to pay a morning visit to Dryden, whom he always respected, found him in an unusual agitation of spirits, even to a trembling. On enquiring the cause, *'I have been up all night, re-*

¹ In 1697, *eight* Stewards officiated; viz. Hugh Colvill, Esq. Captain Thomas Newnam, Orlando Bridgman, Esq. Theophilus Buller, Esq. Leonard Wessell, Esq. Paris Slaughter, Esq. Jeremiah Clarke, Gent. and Francis Le Riche, Gent. Mr. Bridgeman was grandson to Lord Keeper Bridgeman. The names of all these gentlemen, except Mr. Newnam and the musical composer, are found among the Subscribers to the Translation of Virgil.

² For many years Gentleman of the Horse and first Equerry to his present Majesty. He died Sept. 9, 1782.

plied the old bard : *my musical friends made me promise to write them an Ode for their feast of St. Cecilia : I have been so struck with the subject which occurred to me, that I could not leave it till I had COMPLETED it ; here it is, FINISHED at one sitting.*" And immediately he shewed him THIS ode, which places the British lyric poetry above that of any other nation."⁴ This anecdote was communicated to Dr. Warton by Mr. Berenger, whose informer was Mr. Gilbert West, who derived the account from Mr. Pope, to whom it is said to have been imparted by Lord Bolingbroke ; and it cannot be denied that this is a very fair genealogy : but after it has been carefully examined, we shall find, that, like many traditional tales, it is not to be implicitly relied upon ; for our author's own words, already quoted,—“ I am *writing* a song,” &c. manifestly denote a composition produced by study and meditation, and *growing up* under the writer's hands ; and a letter written by Dryden to the younger Mr. Graham, which I have not been able to recover,⁵ proves incontestably, that this admirable

⁴ Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope, vol. ii. p. 20.

⁵ Dr. Birch's words are—“ He observes in an original letter of his, that he was almost a fortnight in composing and correcting it :” he adds, that this information was “ communicated by the very learned and ingenious Richard Graham, Jun. Esq.” I hoped to have found a copy of this letter among Dr. Birch's papers in the Museum ; but I have examined them for that purpose in vain. Of the fortnight here spoken of, we surely may allow *some days* to the original composition.

performance, instead of being struck off at once, and completed at one sitting, was the work of almost a *fortnight*. The words, "I have been up all night," and "my musical friends made me promise to write them an Ode," all denote hurry; and the original relater of the anecdote evidently supposed that it was composed on the spur of the occasion, *recently* before it was wanted; whereas we find from Dryden's own account, that an application on the subject had been made to him, and he had actually begun to write, near *three months* before St. Cecilia's day. It may perhaps be true, that Mr. St. John, happening to call on Dryden, found him just after the general scheme of his Ode first presented itself to his mind, and he had rudely sketched out the mere outlines of it: but the other circumstances appear to be adscititious. It may be doubted too, whether Dryden received forty pounds for writing it, as Derrick relates on the authority of Mr. Moyle;⁶ for the author expressly says, that the undertaking "was no way beneficial." This, however, is not decisive; for that sum may have been a subsequent donation.

It is a singular circumstance, that the name of the composer by whom this admirable Ode was

⁶ Derrick's words are, "Mr. Walter Moyle, who wrote the *Essays*, *used to say*, that it was composed for the Cecilian Concert, and that our author for the use of it received 40l." Mr. Moyle died in 1721; Derrick therefore could not himself have conversed with him, being then not born. In Moyle's works I find nothing on this subject.

originally set to musick, has hitherto been unascertained. Purcell, who had gained new laurels by the musick of Dryden's *KING ARTHUR*, as well as several other operas, though he had been more than once employed by the Stewards of this festival, in 1683, 1692, and probably 1694, would perhaps have been the composer on this occasion ; also, but to the great regret of his country he died two years before, November 21, 1695 ; when he was honoured by an Elegy written by our author,

7 Sir John Hawkins tells us in his *HISTORY OF MUSICK*, that there is a tradition, that " Dryden wrote his *ALEXANDER'S FEAST* with a view to its being set by Purcell, but that Purcell declined the task, as thinking it beyond the powers of musick to express sentiments so superlatively energetick as that ode abounds with."—This tradition the Knight very gravely refutes, by observing that " Purcell composed the *TE DEUM*, and did not scruple to set to musick some of the sublimest passages in the Psalms, the prophecy of Isaiah, and other parts of the Holy Scripture." He omits, however, to state a reason of some *little* import, why neither Dryden could have intended his Ode for Purcell, nor this composer could have set it to musick ;—that he had been *dead* nearly two years before it was written.

8 Purcell died November 21, 1695, and it has been supposed that the following inscription on a tablet to his memory in Westminster-Abbey was written by Dryden :

Here lies

HENRY PURCELL, Esq.

who left this life,

And is gone to that blessed place,

Where only his harmony

can be exceeded :

who appears to have much respected him.* Some other composer, therefore, was to be resorted to:

Obiit 21mo die Novembris,

Anno ætatis suæ 37mo,

Annoq; Domini 1695.

Whether this inscription was written by Dryden or not, the reasoning on which Sir John Hawkins (*HISTORY OF MUSICK*, iv. 509,) grounds this conjecture, is by no means satisfactory. After mentioning that Purcell's *ORPHEUS BRITANNICUS* was dedicated by his widow, in 1698, to *Lady Howard*, he adds, that the foregoing inscription is found in Westminster-Abbey "on a tablet fixed to a pillar, before which formerly stood the organ; placed there by his patroness, the *Lady Elizabeth Howard*." He then tells us, that this same lady, whom he now calls *Lady Howard*, "had been a scholar of Purcell, was the "eldest daughter of Thomas, Earl of Berkshire, and the "wife of Dryden, who is plainly alluded to in the Dedication of the *ORPHEUS BRITANNICUS*. Many of his best "compositions were made for her entertainment, and were "recommended by her own performance. Purcell had set the "musick to *KING ARTHUR*, and many other of Dryden's "dramatick works. Dryden wrote an Ode on his death, "which Dr. Blow set to musick, and *Lady Howard* [for "after all she is still *Lady Howard*,] erected the tablet."

Let us now see how the fact stands. Purcell's widow, in 1698, collected several of his songs, which she published under the title of *ORPHEUS BRITANNICUS*, and dedicated "to *The Honourable the Lady HOWARD*." In this Dedication, after observing in the usual style of Dedications at that period, that the *Lady Howard* "had added the characters of a judge and patron of her late husband's performances to the many excellent qualities which made her the admiration of all that knew her;" and highly commending "her extraordinary skill in musick, and ad-

The musical performance of the preceding year was furnished by Nicola Matteis, a celebrated

mirable performance of Purcell's compositions, whom she had sometimes been pleased to honour with the title of her Master," she proceeds thus :

" Another great advantage to which my husband has often imputed the success of his labours, and which may best plead for your ladyship's favourable acceptance of this Collection, has been the great justness both of thought and numbers, which he found in the poetry of our most refined writers, and, among them, of that HONOURABLE gentleman, who has the dearest and most deserved relation to yourself; and whose excellent compositions were the subject of his last and best performance in musick." She then adds, that " her ladyship had generously prevented her intended performance of the duty she owed her husband's ashes, by erecting a fair monument over him, and gracing it with an inscription : " and to crown all, " her generosity, which was too large to be confined either to his life or his person, had also extended itself to his posterity, to whom her ladyship's favour must be acknowledged to be the most valuable part of their inheritance."

Lady Elizabeth Howard, one of the daughters of Thomas Howard, Earl of Berkshire, was married to our author about the year 1665; if therefore, we suppose her to have been then twenty years old, she must have been born in 1645, and consequently in 1698 was fifty-three years old; a time of life, at which ladies do not commonly devote many of their hours to musick.—From 1665 till her death, she could have been known by no other name than *Lady Elizabeth DRYDEN*. How then does she, in 1698, become *the Honourable the Lady HOWARD*? And how did her husband, John Dryden, the son of a younger brother

Italian violinist.* Neither he, however, nor Purcell's master, Dr. Blow, who was still living, and

of a Baronet's family, become *honourable*, as he is here particularly denominated?—How again, allowing Lady Elizabeth Dryden in her fifty-third year to have been a consummate musical performer, and by her excellent qualities to have gained the admiration of all that knew her, (a character that by no means belonged to her,) how, it may be asked, did she get the money necessary for erecting a *fair monument* in Westminster-Abbey, at a time when she scarcely could muster a few pounds to send to her sons in Rome? All these questions are easily answered, by observing, that the Dedication in question neither is, nor professes to be, addressed to our great poet's wife, but to *the Honourable the Lady Howard*, the last wife of Sir Robert Howard; who, being the son of a peer, is described as the HONOURABLE gentleman who has *the dearest and most deserved relation to her*. The excellent composition which is said to have been the subject of Purcell's last and best performance in music, was, perhaps, BONDUCA, which was altered from Fletcher, as Powell the actor says in the Preface to that piece, "by a person above the *interest part* of an author;" who may have been Sir Robert Howard. BONDUCA, "with new entertainments of vocal and instrumental music [by Purcell], never printed or acted before," was published Oct. 28, 1695, a few weeks only before Purcell's death. (London Gazette, No. 3126.) In this tragedy is the celebrated song, the chorus of which is—"Britons! strike home," &c. which may be here particularly alluded to. Or, Sir Robert might have contributed to the third part of D'Urfey's DON QUIXOTE, the song beginning with the words—"From rosy bowers," and some others in the same piece, which were announced Jan. 6, 1695-6,

had set to musick many of the former Odes in honour of St. Cecilia, was now employed.

in the London Gazette, No. 3146, under the following description: "New Songs in the Third Part of *DON QUIXOTE*, by Mr. D'Ursey, and sung at the Theatre Royal, with other new songs; being the last piece set to musick by the late famous Mr. Henry Purcell, and by Mr. Courteville, Mr. Akeroyd, and other eminent masters of this age." It is well known that D'Ursey was assisted by several gentlemen, who furnished him with songs for various musical entertainments. Or, lastly, the piece alluded to may have been Sir Robert Howard's *INDIAN QUEEN*, which was converted into a semi-opera by Purcell, not long before his death. In *THE INDIAN QUEEN*, the song beginning with the words, "You twelve-hundred deities," and the Incantation Song, are numbered among Purcell's happiest compositions. We shall find, hereafter, from one of our author's letters, which appears to have been written about the time of that musician's death, Sir Robert Howard then sometimes visited the theatre in a morning, doubtless at the rehearsal of some or other of these pieces. In the *ORPHEUS BRITANNICUS*, vol. i. p. 219, we find a song beginning with the words—"Love, thou can'st hear, tho' thou art blind," expressly attributed to Sir Robert Howard.

Collins says in his *PEERAGE*, (article, *Abergavenny*,) that Sir Robert Howard's last wife was Catharine Neville, daughter of Henry, Lord Abergavenny, who died in 1641; and that after the death of Sir Robert, she married Robert Berry, Esquire. But this statement is certainly erroneous. The Christian name of the Lady Howard, with whom we are concerned, was not *Catharine*, but *Annabella*, as appears from the will of Sir Robert Howard, which was made May 26, 1698, and proved on the 7th of the following

Mr. William Turner, who had been for near thirty years a gentleman of the King's chapel, and as we

September; but I do not know her surname. It is said, on no good authority, to have been Dives. According to the *ATALANTIS*, previous to her marriage to Sir Robert Howard, (which is said to have taken place in Feb. 1692-3, when probably she was not more than five-and-twenty,) she had some employment about Queen Mary; who being herself fond of Purcell's musick, might have patronized this lady on account of her musical performance. After her husband's death, she married, as appears from her will in the Prerogative-Office, made Sept. 23, 1724, (Brooke, qu. 327,) the Rev. Edmund Marten, formerly of Somerton in Oxfordshire, but afterwards of Hammer-smith; to whom she bequeathed (under a power reserved to her on her marriage) all her real and personal estate, including all her annuities payable out of the Exchequer, and from his Grace James, Duke of Chandos, or otherwise, and all arrears due thereon.—There is a mezzotinto print of her, (a whole length) scraped by Smith, in 1697, (as appears from a MS. Catalogue of his Works made by himself,) the year before the *ORPHEUS BRITANNICUS* was dedicated to her. In another mezzotinto, executed in 1693, (probably on her marriage,) she is represented in a reclining posture. In both these prints she is denominated, as she is by Mrs. Purcell, "the Honourable Lady Howard." She died at Fulham, and was buried there, Sept. 7, 1728.

* I have not been able to discover the author of the Ode performed at Stationers' Hall in 1696; but the composer is ascertained by the following advertisement in the London Gazette, No. 3250, Monday, January 4, 1696-7: "The musick that was performed of St. Cecilia's day, composed by Signior *Nicola*, will be performed

have seen, was the composer of the Ode sung in 1685,¹ had now risen to such eminence, that the

on Thursday night, in York Buildings, being the 7th instant."

Nicola Matteis, who in the last age was generally called only Signior *Nicola*, came into England about the year 1680, and was the most celebrated violinist of his time. In May, in the preceding year, (London Gazette, No. 3182,) he had published "A Collection of New Songs set by him for the harpsichord, theorbo, or bass-viol, with some new *Airs* for the violin;" and in April, 1699, he published a second book of Songs for the same instruments. In 1698, he appears to have been the manager of the concert in York Buildings. He died, I believe, early in the reign of Queen Anne.

Of this celebrated composer the Hon. Mr. North thus speaks, in his manuscript *Memoirs of Musick* (as quoted by Dr. Burney, iii. 513): "The decay of French musick, and favour of the Italian, [about the end of Charles the Second's reign] came on by degrees. Its beginning was accidental, and occasioned by the arrival of Nicola Matteis. He was an excellent musician, performed wonderfully on the violin. His manner was singular; but he excelled, in one respect, all that had been heard in England before: his *arcata*, or manner of bowing, his shakes, divisions, and indeed his whole style of performance, was surprising, and every stroke of his bow was a mouthful. All that he played was of his own composition; which manifested him to be a very exquisite harmonist, and of a boundless fancy and invention. And by all that I have been able to observe of his abilities, or to hear concerning those of other performers on the violin, none but Corelli seems to have surpassed him."

¹ This appears from the original copy of Tate's Ode, for 1685. Some verses of that Ode, however, slightly al-

degree of Doctor in Musick was conferred on him by the University of Cambridge in 1696. On the present occasion he supplied the sacred musick of the day; for in the third volume of Tudway's Musical Collections* in the Museum, we find—"An Anthem, with symphonies for violins

tered, are exhibited as a *single* song in Purcell's ORPHEUS BRITANNICUS:—"Strike the viol, touch the lute," &c. so that Purcell must either have lent his aid on that occasion, or set the same words to musick at a subsequent period. In like manner we find in the ORPHEUS BRITANNICUS—"Here the *Dæties* approve," &c. as a *single* song, though it makes part of the first Ode for St. Cecilia's day, composed by Purcell, and performed in 1683.

It appears to have been a common practice to select certain songs out of the Entertainments which had been performed in honour of St. Cecilia. Thus, in the SPECTATOR, No. 59, May 8, 1711, we find the following Advertisement:

"At the desire of several persons of quality, for the benefit of Mess. Cuthbert, Lovelace, and White, at Stationers' Hall near Ludgate, to-morrow, being the 9th of May, will be performed a Consort of Vocal and Instrumental Musick, by the best performers. Particularly several select entertainments of the following English Operas; viz. The Indian Queen, King Arthur, the Fairy Queen, and Dioclesian; the Masque in Timon of Athens; the Pastoral in the Libertine, *with several Songs out of the St. Cecilia's Musick*: all composed by that great master, the late Mr. Henry Purcell."

William Turner was one of the second set of Chapel Children after the Restoration, and was a disciple of Dr. Blow. He died in 1740, at the great age of eighty-eight.

* MSS. Harl. 7837—7843.

and trumpets," composed by this gentleman, "for St. Cecilia's day, 1697."¹ As Purcell in 1683, and perhaps in 1694 also, furnished not only a prelude Hymn and his celebrated *THE DRUM and JUBILATE*, but the secular musick required in those years, I thought it probable that Dr. Turner, in 1697, was employed in setting the Ode which made the principal entertainment of that year, as well as the sacred song which preceded it. But this was not the fact: for, after a tedious inquiry, I discovered that the musick of *ALEXANDER'S FEAST* was composed by Jeremiah Clarke,⁴ one of the

¹ " *The King shall rejoice.* Psalm y^e 21th. ver. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 13th. An Anthem, with symphonies, &c. composed by Dr. William Turner, one of the Gent. of his Majesty's King Charles the 2d's Chapell, and of the Choirs of St. Paul's and Westminster. For the solemnity of St. Cecilia's day, 1697." Tudway's Coll. vol. iii. p. 245—272.

In Doctor Brady's Dedication of his Sermon to the Stewards of St. Cecilia's Feast in 1697, he speaks of this anthem as an "admirable performance, which by a management peculiar to them, laboured under no inconveniences of disorder or confusion."

⁴ The original composer of this celebrated Ode was discovered by the following advertisement in the London Gazette, No. 3346, Monday, December 6, 1697:

"The Song composed by Mr. JEREMIAH CLARKE, and sung on St. Cecilia's day, will be performed on Thursday next, at Mr. Hickford's Dancing-school in Panton-street, or in James-street over against the Tennis-court, just by the Blue Posts, there being a door out of

Stewards of the festival of that year ; whose history and unhappy end is thus related by Dr. Burney :

" Jeremiah Clarke had his education in the Chapel Royal, under Dr. Blow, who seems to have had a paternal affection for him. In 1693 he

each street to the room ; and for the benefit of the said Mr. Clarke and Mr. Le Riche, late Stewards of the said Feast. The musick begins at 8."

ALEXANDER'S FEAST was again announced for performance, by the same humble appellation in the following week (London Gazette, No. 3348, Monday, Dec. 13) :

" The *Song* which was sung on St. Cecilia's day, will be performed in York-Buildings, on Thursday next, the 16th instant, with an addition of a new Pastoral on the Peace, composed by Mr. Jeremiah Clarke, and for the benefit of Mr. Le Riche only. The musick begins at 8."

It seems to have been a common practice to perform the Ode for St. Cecilia's day at the Musick-room in York-Buildings, after the original performance at Stationers' Hall. Thus in the London Gazette, No. 2939, Thursday, Jan. 11, 1693-4, I find,—“ In York-Buildings, on Monday next, will be performed the last St. Cecilia's song ; beginning at the usual hour.” Again in No. 2945, Feb. 1, 1693-4 : “ At the Consort in York-Buildings, on Monday next the 5th instant, will be performed Mr. Finger's St. Cecilia's Song, intermixt with variety of other new musick ; at the ordinary rates.” In a former advertisement it is called the *last* St. Cecilia's Song. So also, in No. 3458, January 2, 1698-9 : “ On Wednesday next will be performed in York-Buildings, Mr. Daniel Purcell's Musick, made for last St. Cecilia's Feast ; for the benefit of Mr. Howell and Mr. Shore ; with an addition of new vocal

resigned in his favour the place of Master of the Children and Almoner of St. Paul's, of which cathedral Clarke was soon after likewise appointed Organist. In 1700, Dr. Blow and his pupil were appointed Gentlemen Extraordinary in the King's Chapel; of which in 1704, on the death of Mr. Francis Piggot, they were jointly admitted to the place of Organist.

and instrumental musick; beginning at 7 at night."—Again, No. 3556, Monday, December 11, 1699: "On Wednesday next, the 13th instant, will be performed at York-Buildings, a Consort of Musick, with the last St. Cecilia's Song; for the benefit of Ma. Pate [a singer] and Mr. [Daniel] Purcell; beginning exactly at 8 at night."

In some instances a St. Cecilia's Ode made a part of the entertainment of the Concert in York-Buildings, though not of the most recent date. See the London Gazette, No. 2943, Thursday, January 25, 1693-4: "At the Consort-room in York-Buildings, on this present Thursday, at the usual hour, will be performed Mr. Purcell's Song for St. Cecilia's day in the year 1692, together with some other compositions of his, both vocal and instrumental; for the entertainment of his Highness, Prince Lewes of Baden."

Again, in No. 3390, Monday, May 9, 1698:

"On Tuesday next, the 10th instant, will be performed in York-Buildings, an Entertainment of Vocal and Instrumental Musick, being St. Cecilia's Song composed by Dr. Blow, and several other new songs; for the benefit of Mr. Bowman and Mr. Snow."—Dr. Blow's Song, here mentioned, must have been either that composed in 1684 or 1691, unless he also composed the song in 1695.

“ The compositions of Clarke are not numerous, as an untimely and melancholy end was put to his existence, before his genius had been allowed time to expand.

“ Early in life, he was so unfortunate as to conceive a violent and hopeless passion for a very beautiful lady of a rank far superior to his own; and his sufferings, under these circumstances, became at length so intolerable, that he resolved to terminate them by suicide. The late Mr. Samuel Wiely, one of the lay-vicars of St. Paul's, who was very intimate with him, related the following extraordinary story, which he had from his unfortunate friend himself. ‘ Being at the house of a friend in the country, he found himself so miserable, that he suddenly determined to return to London: his friend, observing in his behaviour great marks of dejection, furnished him with a horse, and a servant to attend him. In his way to town, a fit of melancholy and despair having seized him, he alighted, and, giving his horse to the servant, went into a field, in the corner of which there was a pond surrounded with trees, which pointed out to his choice two ways of getting rid of life: but not being more inclined to one than the other, he left it to the determination of chance; and taking a piece of money out of his pocket and tossing it in the air, determined to abide by its decision; but the money falling on its edge in the clay, seemed to prohibit both these means of de-

struction. His mind was too much disordered to receive comfort or take advantage of this delay; he therefore mounted his horse and rode to London, determined to find some other means of getting rid of life. And in July, 1707, not many weeks after his return, he shot himself in his own house in St. Paul's Church-yard. The late Mr. John Reading, Organist of St. Dunstan's church, a scholar of Dr. Blow, and master of Mr. Stanley, intimately acquainted with Clarke, happening to go by the door at the instant the pistol went off, upon entering the house, found his friend and fellow-student in the agonies of death."

Jeremiah Clarke has hitherto been deprived of the honour of having his name connected with that of Dryden, probably in consequence of the true date of ALEXANDER'S FEAST not being generally known. Though from the high rank which he held among his musical brethren, as a sweet and pathetick composer, he may be supposed to have done justice to some parts of this Ode, and from his own feelings also might be expected with peculiar felicity to have adapted musick to those passages of the poet, where the mightymaster, after having successfully infused "soft pity," "smiled to see, that *love* was in the next degree;"—his powers appear to have sunk under the various and opposite musical expressions, which the hilarity, animation, pathos,

and sublimity of this incomparable Ode require :⁶ for his composition on this occasion added so little

⁶ Dr. Burney gives the following character of this elegant composer, which fully accounts for his having failed in those rapid, vehement, and impassioned, movements, that many passages of this sublime Ode require :

“ The Anthems of this pathetick composer, which Dr. Boyce has printed, are not only more natural and pleasing than those of his master, Dr. Blow, but wholly free from licentious harmony and breach of rule. He is mild, placid, and *seemingly incapable of violence of any kind*. In his first anthem, (vol. ii.) which required cheerfulness and jubilation, he does not appear in his true character, which is tender and plaintive. The subject of the next is therefore better suited to the natural bias of his genius. There is indeed nothing in this anthem, which indicates a master of grand and sublime conceptions ; but there is a clearness and accuracy in the score, and melancholy cast of melody and harmony suitable to the words, which are likewise well accented, that cannot fail to sooth and please every appetite for musick, which is not depraved.

“ His full anthem—*‘ Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem, ’* is extremely natural and agreeable, and as modern and graceful as the gravity of the choral service will, with propriety, allow. And in his verse anthem, the movements in triple time are as pathetick, and even elegant, as any musick of the same period, ecclesiastical or secular, that was produced either at home or on the continent. There is a very agreeable verse anthem of his composition in a Collection published by Walsh,—*‘ The Lord is my strength and my song, ’*—with more spirit in it than I thought he could muster. But the verse,—*‘ O Lord, send us now prosperity, ’*—on a ground base, in Purcell’s manner, is extremely pleasing and ingenious. Tenderness is,

to his reputation, that it was never published. Sir Richard Steele, who, among various projects, was engaged, during the publication of the *SPECTATOR*, in the management of a publick concert in York-Buildings, having requested Mr. Hughes to make some alterations in this piece,⁷ it was again set to musick by Steele's coadjutor in that undertaking,

however, so much his characteristick, that he may well be called the musical Otway of his time."

Jeremiah Clarke composed the air, to which, with an odd, though accidental, relation to his unfortunate end, the song in the *BEGGAR'S OPERA* is sung, which begins with the words—" 'Tis woman, that seduces all mankind."—No other air of his is employed in that opera. In 1699, in conjunction with Daniel Purcell and Richard Leve-ridge, the Singer, he composed the musick of the *ISLAND PRINCESS*, altered from Fletcher by Motteux, and exhibited as an opera in that year. And in the following year was published (*London Gazette*, No. 3563.)—The Second Book of the *HARPSICHORD MASTER*, containing Almands, Corants, Sarabands, Airs, Minuets, and Jigs, by Dr. Blow, Mr. Courteville, Mr. CLARKE, Mr. Crofts, &c.

⁷ On this occasion Sir Richard Steele wrote the following letter to Mr. Hughes :

" Dear Sir,

[April - - - 1711.]

" Mr. Clayton and I desire you, as soon as you can conveniently, to alter this poem [*ALEXANDER'S FEAST*] for musick, preserving as many of Dryden's words and verses, as you can. It is to be performed by a voice well skilled in recitative ; but you understand all these matters much better than

" Your affectionate humble servant,

" R. STEELE."

The principal alterations made by Hughes, are these

Thomas Clayton, a musical pretender,* who had been some time in Italy, but brought with him

What in the original is entitled *Chorus*, he has made *Air*; and all that is not *Air*, is *Recitative*. The greatest change that he has made, is in the third stanza, the beginning of which he has thus altered:

RECITATIVE.

- " The praise of Bacchus then the sweet musician sung,
 " Of Bacchus ever fair and ever young.
 " *Behold, he comes, the victor god!*
 " Flush'd with a purple grace,
 " He shews his honest face,
 " *As when, by tygers drawn, o'er India's plains he rode;*
 " *While loud with conquest and with wine*
 " *His jolly troop around him reel'd along,*
 " *And taught the vocal skies to join*
 " *In this applauding song.*

DUETTO.

" Bacchus, ever gay and young, &c."

After the couplet,

- " At length, with love and wine at once oppress'd,
 " The vanquish'd victor sunk upon her breast,"—

the following Duet is introduced:

1. " Phœbus, patron of the lyre,
2. " Cupid, god of soft desire,
1. " Cupid, god of soft desire,
2. " Phœbus, patron of the lyre;
1. 2. " How victorious are your charms!
1. " Crown'd with conquest,
2. " Full of glory,
1. 2. " See a monarch falls before you,
 " Chain'd in beauty's clasping arms!"

The other changes are chiefly verbal, and some of

from that country none of the graces of his art. It was first performed in its new form, with Clayton's musick, on the 24th of May, 1711;⁹ but

them, however they may have rendered the lines more commodious for musick, certainly cannot be considered as improvements. In—*Fallen from his high estate*, the repetition of the word *fallen* is not adopted; and instead of these four pathetick lines,

"Deserted, at his utmost need,
 "By those his former bounty fed,
 "On the bare earth exposed he lies,
 "With not a friend to close his eyes,"—

we find only this couplet:

"On earth the expiring monarch lies,
 "With not a friend to close his eyes."

* Thomas Clayton was one of the royal band of musicians, in the time of King William and Queen Mary. He set to musick the first opera, properly so called, ever exhibited on the English stage, which was entitled *ARSINOE, QUEEN OF CYPRUS*, and performed at the theatre in Drury-Lane, January 16, 1704-5; the pit and boxes being open only to Subscribers. Though formed on the Italian model, it was written in English. "It is scarcely to be credited, (says Dr. Burney,) that in the course of the first year, this miserable performance, which neither deserved the name of a *drama* by its poetry, nor an *opera* by its musick, should sustain twenty-four representations, and the second year, eleven." Clayton likewise set Addison's opera of *ROSAMOND*, which first appeared, March 4, 1706-7; but the musick was so extremely bad, that notwithstanding Addison's high reputation, *ROSAMOND*, after three representations, was dismissed from the scene.

⁹ In the original edition of the *SPECTATOR*, No. 73, Thursday, May 24, 1711, it is thus announced:

with so little success, that it was repeated but three times. Gildon, who seems to have been himself

" An Entertainment of Musick, consisting of a poem called the Passion of Sappho, written by Mr. Harrison, and the Feast of Alexander, written by Mr. Dryden; as they are set to musick by Mr. Thomas Clayton, (Author of ARSINOE,) will be performed at his house in York-Buildings, this day, being the 24th instant, beginning at eight in the evening. Tickets, at 5s. each, may be had," &c. Jacob Tonson had previously more than once advertised, as just published by him, " The Passion of Sappho, and Feast of Alexander, set to musick by Mr. Thomas Clayton, as it will be performed at his house," &c.

The third representation, which was on the 16th of July, was announced by the following advertisement :

" This evening, at 8 o'clock, at the request of several persons of quality, (who, for the better attention to the performance, and of the warmth of the season, have desired that only 100 tickets should be given out,) an Entertainment of Musick, consisting of a poem called the Passion of Sappho, written by Mr. Harrison; a Song beginning—*If wine and musick have the power*, by Mr. Prior; and the Feast of Alexander," &c.

Mr. Hughes, having been asked by Steele to give his opinion of Clayton's musick for this Ode, thus censures it, in a letter written soon after the first performance :

" . . . -The symphonies in many places seem to me perplexed, and not made to pursue any subject or point. . . .

" The overture of ALEXANDER ought to be great and noble; instead of which, I find only a hurry of the instruments, not proper, in my poor opinion, and without any design or fugue, and, I am afraid, perplexed and irregular in the composition, as far as I have any ideas or experience. Enquire this of better judgments.

" The duet of Bacchus is cheerful, and has a good effect.

a musician, after observing that this admirable Ode had been twice ill set to musick, mentions,

but that beginning 'Cupid, Phœbus,' &c. I cannot think shews any art, and is in effect no more than a single air. Nothing shews both genius and learning more than this sort of composition; the chief beauty of which consists in giving each voice different points, and making those points work together, and interchange regularly and surprisingly, or one point following itself in both the voices, in a kind of canon, as it is called. These artfulnesses, when well executed, give infinite delight to the ear; but that which I have mentioned is not formed after those designs; but where the voices join, they move exactly together in plain counterpoint, which shews little more than a single air.

"I think the words in general naturally enough expressed, and in some places pathetically; but because you seem to think this the whole mystery of setting, I take this opportunity to assure you, that it is as possible to express words naturally and pathetically in very faulty composition, as it is to hit a likeness in a bad picture. If the musick in score, without the words, does not prove itself by the rules of composition, which relate to the harmony and motion of different notes at the same time, the notes in the singing parts will not suffice, though they express the words ever so naturally. This is properly the art of composition, in which there is room to shew admirable skill, abstracted from the words; and in which the rules for the union of sounds are a kind of syntaxis, from which no one is allowed to err. I do not apply this last particular to any thing, but only to give you a general idea of what is composition. Yet, upon the whole, as far as I am able to judge, the musick of Sappho, and Alexander, though in some places agreeable, will not please masters."

' Hughes's Correspondence, vol. i. p. 40.

that another composer, of no mean fame, meditated, in 1721, making a third essay upon it ;¹ but whether he executed his intention, I know not. About fifteen years afterwards, Handel having set it anew, it was performed under his direction in 1736, at the Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden, with great success.²

The hostilities which the Puritans in England had waged against the Stage in the middle of the reign of Elizabeth, and which had been renewed by Prynne in that of Charles the First, were revived in France in 1694 ; and the same quotations from the Fathers and other ancient writers, to prove the unlawfulness of all scenick entertainments, which had been refuted as often as they were produced, were again brought forward, with the same intemperate and mistaken zeal ; the object of these re-

¹ THE LAWS OF POETRY, p. 84, 8vo. 1721.

² It was first performed on February 19, 1735-6, at opera prices. " The publick expectations and effects of this representation (says Dr. Burney,) seem to have been correspondent, for the next day we are told in the publick papers, [London Daily Post, and General Advertiser, Feb. 20,] that " there never was, upon the like occasion, so numerous and splendid an audience at any theatre in London, there being at least thirteen hundred persons present ; and it is judged that the receipts of the house could not amount to less than £.450. It met with general applause, though attended with the inconvenience of having the performers placed at too great a distance from the audience, which we hear will be rectified the next time of performance."—HIST. OF MUSIC, iv. 391. There were at this time six theatres open in London.

formers being, not merely to correct the abuses of plays, but to prove from those abuses, that all theatrical performances ought to be prohibited.¹

¹ After having acknowledged that he had in many instances been justly taxed, our author observes, that his antagonist, whose last argument against the stage is drawn from the opinions of the Fathers and the judgments of Ecclesiastical Councils, "had lost ground at the latter end of the day, by pursuing his point too far: from immoral plays to no plays, *ab abusu ad usum non valet consequentia*."

Congreve, whose reply to Collier was published in 1698, however weak in other parts of this controversy, has here unquestionably the advantage. "His authorities from the Fathers, (says he,) with all due respect to them, are certainly no more to the purpose, than if he had cited the two Attick laws against the licentiousness of the Old Comedy; in truth not so much: for the invectives of the Fathers were levelled at the cruelty of the Gladiators and the obscenity of the Pantomimes. If some of them have confounded the *drama* with such spectacles, it was an oversight of zeal very allowable in those days, and in the infancy of Christianity, when the religion of the heathens was intermingled with their poetry and theatrical representations: therefore Christians might then very well be forbidden to frequent even the best of them. As for our theatres, St. Austin and Lactantius knew no more of them than they did of the Antipodes; and they might with as much difficulty have been persuaded that the former would in aftertimes be tolerated in a Christian state, as that the latter would be received for a manifest and common truth, and made intelligible to the capacity of every child." Amendments to Mr. Collier's false and imperfect citations, &c. 8vo. 1698.

The pieces which appeared on this occasion at Paris, probably suggested the subject to Jeremy Collier, a nonjuring clergyman, whose censures of Dryden, Congreve, and Vanbrugh, in his "Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage," which appeared in March, 1697-8, drew from the two latter a several Defence of

About two months after the appearance of Collier's book, Dryden thus noticed it, in an Epistle to Motteux, prefixed to his play, entitled *BEAUTY IN DISTRESS*, which was published in June, 1698 (London Gazette, No. 3402):

- " 'Tis hard, my friend, to write in such an age,
- " Which damns not only poets, but the stage.
- " That sacred art, by Heaven itself infused,
- " Which Moses, David, Solomon, have used,
- " Is now to be no more : the Muses' foes
- " Would sink their Maker's praises into prose.
- " Were they content to prune the lavish vine
- " Of straggling branches, and improve the wine,
- " Who, but a madman, would his thoughts defend ?
- " All would submit, for all but fools would mend.
- " But when to common sense they give the lie,
- " And turn distorted words to blasphemy,
- " *They* give the scandal ; and the wise discern
- " Their glosses teach an age too apt to learn.
- " What I have loosely or profanely writ,
- " Let them to fires, their due desert, commit :
- " Nor, when accused by me, let them complain ;
- " Their faults, and not their function, I arraign.
- " Rebellion, worse than witchcraft, they pursued ;
- " The pulpit preach'd the crime the people rued :
- " The stage was silenced ; for the Saints would see
- " In fields perform'd their plotted tragedy."

their plays; but Dryden so far yielded to his opponent, as not to make any formal reply, acknowledging, with great candour, whatever was exceptionable in his dramattick compositions, which he wished wholly expunged from his writings; yet stating some circumstances in extenuation⁴ of the offences against morality, with which he did not deny his plays were in some instances justly chargeable. Collier's book, though extremely ill written, had however a very salutary effect; and from that period, the gross licentiousness and indecency, which from the time of the Restoration had disgraced the theatre, were banished from the scene.

A few weeks before Collier made his attack upon the stage, Dryden honoured George Granville, who afterwards was created Lord Lansdowne, with an Epistle prefixed to his tragedy called *HEROICK LOVE*.⁵ Having said in these commendatory verses, that he should resign his laurels to the youthful poet with less regret, as they had already become withered on his brows, and he hoped would revive on those of his friend, this second bequest of his poetick crown did not escape the notice of one of the performers at the theatre

⁴ See his Epilogue to *THE PILGRIM*, written two years afterwards.

⁵ Published, February 19, 1697-8. *London Gazette*, No. 3368.—The Prologue was written by Henry St. John, afterwards Viscount Bolingbroke.

in Drury-lane, who appears to have been highly exasperated by the following lines :

- " Thine be the laurel, then ; thy blooming age
- " Can best, if any can, support the stage ;
- " Which so declines, that shortly we may see
- " Players and plays reduced to second infancy.
- " Sharp to the world, but thoughtless of renown,
- " They plot not on the stage, but on the town ;
- " And in despair their empty pit to fill,
- " Set up some foreign monster in a bill :
- " Thus they jog on, still tricking, never thriving,
- " And murd'ring plays, which they miscall—reviving.
- " Our sense is nonsense, through their pipes convey'd ;
- " Scarcè can a poet know the play he made,
- " 'Tis so disguis'd in death ; nor thinks 'tis he
- " That suffers in the mangled tragedy :
- " Thus Itys first was kill'd, and after dress'd
- " For his own sire, the chief invited guest." ⁶

After having completed the review of his *Virgil*, to which he devoted nine entire days, he for some

⁶ In the Preface to a tragedy entitled *THE FATAL DISCOVERY, OR LOVE IN RUINS*, 4to. 1698, (written by an anonymous author, on the same subject with Lord Orford's *MYSTERIOUS MOTHER*,) George Powel, the principal actor, at this time, at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-lane, retaliated on our author by the following animadversions, which doubtless he thought extremely witty and sarcastick :

" . . . Here I am afraid he makes but a coarse compliment, when this great wit, with his treacherous memory, forgets, that he had given away his laurels upon record twice before, viz. once to Mr. Congreve and another time to Mr. Southerne : Pr'ythee, old *Œdipus*, expound this

time probably fluctuated between different projects, one of which certainly was the translation of

mystery! Dost thou set up thy transubstantiation miracle in the donation of thy idol bays, that thou hast them fresh, new, and whole, to give them three times over? . . .

" . . . For the most mortal stroke at us, he charges us with downright *murdering of plays, which we call reviving*. I will not derogate from the merit of those senior actors of both sexes, of the other house, that shine in their several perfections, in whose lavish praises he is so highly transported: but, at the same time, he makes himself but an arbitrary judge on our side, to condemn unheard, and that under no less a conviction than murder, when I cannot learn, for a fair judgment upon us, that his reverend crutches have ever brought him within our doors since the division of the companies [1695]. 'Tis true, I think, we have revived some pieces of Dryden, as his SEBASTIAN, MAIDEN QUEEN, MARRIAGE A-LA-MODE, KING ARTHUR, &c. But here let us be tried by a Christian Jury, the Audience, and not receive the bow-string from his Mahometan Grand Signiorship. 'Tis true, his more particular pique against us, as he has declared himself, is in relation to our reviving his ALMANZOR. There, indeed, he has reason to be angry, for our waking that sleepy dowdy, and exposing his nonsense, not ours; and if that dish did not please him, we have a Scotch proverb for our justification, viz. *'twas rotten roasted, because, &c.* and the world must expect, 'twas very hard crutching up what Hart and Mohun before us could not prop. I confess, he is a little severe, when he will allow our best performance to bear no better fruit than a crab vintage. Indeed, if we young actors spoke but half as sourly as his old gall scribbles, we should be all crab all over."

Homer.⁷ His former antagonist, Mr. Montague, had now risen to be First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer; and affecting to be a general patron of literary men, could not neglect the first poet of the age. His name, therefore, is found among the Subscribers to the translation of Virgil, and our author probably had received other pecuniary favours from him.⁸ Dryden appears to have understood one well-known foible of the Prime Minister, and submitted about this time some verses to his perusal and judgment. "My thoughts (says he, in a letter to this gentleman, written apparently in 1698 or 1699,) at present are fix'd on Homer: and by my translation of the first Iliad, I find him a poet more according to my genius than Virgil, and consequently hope I may

⁷ This work had been suggested to him in the conclusion of the anonymous verses prefixed to his Virgil in 1697:

" For this great task our loud applause is due,
 " We own old favours, but must press for new;
 " The expecting world demands one labour more,
 " And thy lov'd HOMER does thy aid implore,
 " To right his injured works, and set them free
 " From the lewd rhymes of groveling Ogilby:
 " Then shall his verse in graceful pomp appear,
 " Nor will his birth renew the ancient jar;
 " On those Greek cities we shall look with scorn,
 " And in our Britain think the poet born."

⁸ " Mr. D[ryden] (says Milbourne) since he received Mr. M[ontagu]e's *stamp*, is of another clan; a mere renegado from monarchy, poetry, and good sense."

do him more justice, in his sly way of writing; which, as it is liable to more faults, so it is capable of more beauties than the exactness and sobriety of Virgil."

It appears from Milbourne's Notes,⁹ published in 1698, that this work was then generally ex-

⁹ The full title of Milbourne's work is—"Notes on Dryden's Virgil, in a Letter to a Friend; with an Essay on the same poet, 8vo. 1698. The Essay is, a translation of the first and fourth Pastoral, and the first Georgick, by the Annotator; for subjoining which, he is styled by Pope "*the fairest of all critics*."

In p. 27, after quoting from the Delicatory Preface of the *Æneid* the following sentence—"He who can write well in rhyme, may write better in blank verse," he adds—"We shall know that, when we see how much better Dryden's HOMER will be than his Virgil."

Milbourne's enmity to our author perhaps originally arose from Dryden's having taken his work out of his hands; for it appears from the following account given by one who calls him his "honoured friend," that he once projected a translation of Virgil, and published a version of the first *Æneid*:

"That best of poets (says Motteux) having so long continued a stranger to tolerable English, Mr. Milbourne pitied his hard fate; and seeing that several great men had undertaken some episodes of his *Æneis*, without any design of Englishing the whole, he gave us the first book of it some years ago, *with a design to go through the poem*. It was the misfortune of that first attempt to appear just about the time of the late Revolution, when few had leisure to mind such books; yet, though by reason of his absence it was printed with a world of faults, those that are suf-

pected; and it was supposed that the version of Homer would be in blank verse. What ground

ficient judges have done it the justice to esteem it a very successful attempt, and cannot but wish that he would compleat the entire translation." GENT. JOURN. for August, 1692.

That his impotent endeavour to depreciate Dryden's translation arose from some personal pique or interested motive, may be inferred from the following letter, found among Mr. Tonson's papers; in which he expresses very different, and probably his real, sentiments, concerning the great poet, whom, in his animadversions, he presumed to treat with outrageous insolence and contempt:

" Mr. TONSON, *Yarmouth, Novemb. 24.—90.*

" You'll wonder perhaps at this from a stranger; but y^e reason of it may perhaps abate somewhat of y^e miracle, and it's this. On Thursday the twentyth instant, I receiv'd Mr. Drydens AMPHITRYO: I leave out the Greeke termination, as not so proper in my opinion, in English. But to passe that; I liked the play, and read it over with as much of criticisme and ill nature as y^e time (being about one in y^e morning, and in bed,) would permit. Going to sleep very well pleas'd, I could not leave my bed in y^e morning without this sacrifice to the authours genius: it was too sudden to be correct, but it was very honestly meant, and is submitted to yours and Mr. D^r. disposall.

Hail, Prince of Witts! thy fumbling Age is past,
Thy youth and witt and art's renew'd at last.
So on some rock the Joviall bird assays
Her ore-grown beake, that marke of age, to rayse;
That done, through yield'ing air she cutts her way,
And strongly stoops againe, and breaks the trembling
prey.

there was for such an opinion, I have not been able to discover. Certainly, however, when he did sit down to translate the first book of the

What though prodigious thunder stripp'd thy brows
Of envy'd bays, and the dull world allows
Shadwell should wear them, — wee'll applaud the
change;

Where nations feel it, who can thinke it strange!
So have I seen the long-ear'd brute aspire
To drest commode with every smallest wire;
With nightrail hung on shoulders, gravely stalke,
Like bawd attendant on Aurelias walke.
Hang't! give the sop ingratefull world its will;
He wears the laurell,—thou deservs't it still.
Still smooth, as when, adorn'd with youthful pride,
For thy dear sake the blushing virgins dyed;
When the kind gods of witt and love combined,
And with large gifts thy yielding soul refined.

Not Phœbus could with gentler words pursue
His flying Daphne, not the morning dew
Falls softer then the words of amorous Jove,
When melting, dying, for Alcmene's love.

Yet briske and airy too, thou fill'st the stage,
Unbroke by fortune, undecayed by age.
French wordy witt by thine was long surpast;
Now Rome's thy captive, and by thee wee taste
Of their rich dayntyes; but so finely drest,
Theirs was a country meal, thine a triumphant feast.

If this to thy necessityes wee ow,
O, may they greater still and greater grow!
Nor blame the wish; Plautus could write in chaines,
Wee'll blesse thy wants, while wee enjoy thy pains.
Wealth makes the poet lazy, nor can fame,
That gay attendant of a spritely flame,

Iliad, as Dr. Johnson has observed, he gave the preference to rhyme : a circumstance, which considerably shakes whatever credit may belong to a story told by Richardson, that Dryden, while he

A Dorset or a Wycherly invite,
Because they feel no pinching wants, to write.

Go on ! endenizon the Romane slave ;
Let an eternal spring adorne his grave ;
His ghost would gladly all his fame submitt
To thy strong judgment and thy piercing witt.
Purged by thy hand, he speaks immortal sense,
And pleases all with modish excellence.
Nor would we have thee live on empty praise
The while, for, though we can't restore the bays,
While thou writ'st thus,—to pay thy merites due,
Wee'll give the claret and the pension too.

" By this you may guesse I'm none of the author's enemyes ; and, to prove that the better, I desire you'd supply me with his *Essay on Dramatick Poetry*, *Wild Gallant*, *Rival Lady*, *Sir Martin Marall*, *Evening Love*, *Conquest of Granada*, both parts, *Amboyna*, *Annus Mirabilis*, *Poeme on the returne of Charles the 2d*, *On his Coronation*, *To Ld. Ch. Hide*, *On the death of Charles the 2d*. The rest I have allready. You may send them by *Yarmouth coach* or *Norwich waggon* ; both go from the *Green Dragon* in *Bishopsgate-street* (I thinke on *Thursday morning*.) and by either of 'em, if directed to me near the church in *Great Yarmouth*, *Norfolke*, they'l come safe to my hand ; and what they come to shall be return'd with thanks, the first opportunity, by

" Your humble servant,

" LUKE MILBOURNE."

Dryden, in his Preface to the *FABLES*, hints, that Milbourne was turned out of his benefice (probably in *Nor-*

was translating Virgil, said to a northern Baronet, (perhaps Sir Wilfrid Lawson, of Isell, in Cumberland,) that if he were to begin that work again, he should do it in blank verse.*

That in the middle of the year 1698, he began to modernize Chaucer, may be collected from a letter to Mr. Pepys,¹ written at a subsequent period; from which we learn, that "the Character of a Good Parson" was introduced into this work on his suggestion. In the review of the old English poets, which, in conformity to the advice of Sir George Mackenzie, he had made soon after he obtained the laurel, I doubt whether he went so high as Chaucer; but however that may have been, it is certain that he had at no period very deeply studied our ancient language; and that when he resolved to give rejuvenescence to the venerable father of English poetry, he brought to his task only such a knowledge of his author, as would enable him to clothe Chaucer's meaning with the rich trappings of his own mellifluous verse. In this neglect of archaïologick lore he was by no means singular; for to the great mass of English readers at that time there is good reason for believing that this ancient bard was nearly as difficult to be understood, as if his works had been written in a foreign

(folk) for writing libels on his parishioners. Beside the pieces already mentioned, he published a metrical translation of the Psalms, and thirty-one single sermons. He died in 1720.

* See p. 113.

¹ Dryden's LETTERS, Nq. XXVI.

language. Even a certain portion of ridicule was then, and for forty years afterwards, attached to all antiquarian researches ; and he who expended any part of his time in investigating the customs and manners of preceding ages, was generally considered extremely whimsical, if not slightly deranged in his understanding.

Having completed about two-thirds of his proposed undertaking, in the spring of 1699 he entered into a contract^a to furnish his bookseller with ten thousand verses, for the sum of three hundred pounds ; of which two hundred and fifty guineas were to be paid down, and the remainder on printing a second edition. In consequence probably of Pope's saying to Mr. Spence, that " Dryden had *sixpence each line* for his *FABLES*,"* it has erroneously been supposed that Tonson agreed on this occasion to pay sixpence a line for whatever number of verses Dryden should produce, more or less, as they might prove ; and Dr. Johnson, finding on numbering the lines contained in the *FABLES*, that they amounted to more than twelve thousand, conceived that the payment must have been enlarged. But no such agreement as this was made. The poet only stipulated to furnish ten thousand verses, seven thousand five hundred of which, or nearly that number, he delivered at the time of the contract ; and though he afterwards produced and gave Tonson about five thousand, instead of three

^a See No. II. in the APPENDIX.

* ANECDOTES.

thousand, verses, this was done *ex abundanti*, and no additional charge was thought of.¹

It has been suggested, that, the lines contracted for being deficient, the author was obliged to insert the Ode on St. Cecilia, to make good the stipulated number; but the foregoing statement proves decisively that could not be the case; for the volume of FABLES contains in fact about eleven thousand seven hundred verses, exclusive of that Ode: and equally groundless is another anecdote, mentioned by the late Sir David Dalrymple,⁴ Lord Hailes, that when the tale fell short, Dryden retired into Tonson's back-parlour, and on the spot wrote fifty verses, to fulfil his contract.

While engaged in this work, he wrote the Epistle⁵ to his first cousin, John Driden of Ches-

¹ The receipt given by Anne Sylvius in 1713, (APPENDIX, No. II.) when the second edition of the FABLES was sent to the press, shews that no more than £.300 in the whole were paid for that work.

⁴ In a paper containing a few observations on Johnson's Life of Dryden, which was given to me by the late Mr. Boswell.

⁵ The following verses in this Epistle ascertain it to have been written after Milbourne's attack in 1698:

" So liv'd our sires, ere doctors learn'd to kill,
 " And multiply'd with theirs the weekly bill.
 " The first physicians by debauch were made;
 " Excess began, and sloth sustains the trade.
 " Pity, the gen'rous kind their cares bestow
 " To search forbidden truths; (a sin to know :)
 " To which if human science could attain,
 " The doom of death, pronounced by God, were vain,

terton,* near Stilton, in the county of Huntingdon ; which, I believe, first appeared in the volume of

- " In vain the leech would interpose delay ;
- " Fate fastens first, and vindicates the prey.
- " What help from art's endeavours can we have ?
- " Gibbons but guesses, nor is sure to save ;
- " But MAURUS sweeps whole parishes, and peoples }
every grave ;
- " And no more mercy to mankind will use,
- " Than when he robb'd and murder'd Maro's muse.
- " Would'st thou be soon dispatch'd, and perish whole,
- " Trust MAURUS with thy life, and MILBOURNE with
thy soul."

Maurus was Sir Richard Blackmore, whom he has again lashed under the same appellation in the Prologue to THE PILGRIM.

* This gentleman was the second son of Sir John Driden, the second Baronet of this family, of whom some account has been given in a former page. (See pp. 23, 24, n., and p. 39. n.) He was four years younger than the poet, having been born in 1635. From an old list of matriculations between 1650 and 1667, in the Archives at Oxford, it appears that he was a member of Wadham College, in that University, and was matriculated, November 12, 1651. His elder brother, Sir Robert, became a member of the same college in the preceding year. In the Epistle to his kinsman our author alludes to his grandfather, Sir Robert Beville, from whom he derived the valuable estate of Chesterton, and who appears to have been imprisoned in the time of Charles the First, for resisting some irregular levy of money ; a circumstance which perhaps induced Sir John Driden, who married the daughter of Sir Robert Beville, to take so strong a part afterwards with Cromwell. Mr. John Driden represented the county of Huntingdon in parliament in 1690, and from 1700 till his death. He died unmarried, January 8, 1707-8, and was

the FABLES, no separate edition of it having hitherto been discovered. It was inserted there, not to complete the stipulated number of verses, as has been suggested, (for the volume contains above eleven thousand five hundred verses exclusive of this poem and ALEXANDER'S FEAST,) but to do honour to his kinsman, by being connected with his admirable Ode and the popular Tales which compose the book in which it was introduced.—No kind of cordiality subsisted at any period between Sir Robert Driden,¹ the elder brother of this gen-

buried at Chesterton, where a monument was erected to his memory by his nephew, Robert Pigott, with a Latin inscription, containing an high eulogium on him.

¹ It has been observed in a former page, that Sir Robert Driden, beside his political differences with our author, was offended with him for his departure from the family name.—In the latter end of the reign of Charles the Second a new ground of offence was given; for, in 1679, he made a still wider deviation from it, spelling his name *Dreyden*, as appears from the following advertisement in the London Gazette, No. 1472, Monday, December 29, 1679, which I did not see till the sheet was worked off, in which the Rose-Alley *ambuscade* is mentioned:

“Whereas John *Dreyden*, Esq. was on Thursday the 18th instant, at night, barbarously assaulted and wounded in Rose-street, in Covent-Garden, by diverse men unknown: if any person shall make discovery of the said offenders to the said Mr. *Dreyden*, or to any Justice of the Peace, he shall not only receive fifty pounds, which is deposited in the hands of Mr. Blanchard, goldsmith, next door to Temple-Bar, for the said purpose, but if he be a principal or an accessory in the said fact, his Majesty is graciously pleased to promise him his pardon for the same.”

tleman, and our author; and probably from the downfall of usurpation to the reign of King William, there was scarce any correspondence between him and either of his kinsmen; for in the early part of their lives having been bred stern republicans, they doubtless rejoiced little in the restoration of monarchy. After the Revolution, however, the nation being secured by the Declaration of Rights against a repetition of those arbitrary and illegal measures which had been adopted by King James, and the ferment in which England had been kept for some years, being allayed, Mr. Dryden, it may be supposed, became more moderate; and in the latter part of the poet's life appears to have

This fancy of our author continued for some years; for in the titlepage of the second edition of his *ESSAY OF DRAMATICK POESY*, in 1684, which he corrected with great care, we find his name spelt in the same way—*John Dreyden*, Esq.

The following extract from an old newspaper, relative to the same transaction, with which I was furnished by Dr. Charles Burney, junior, having lain hid under a mass of papers, from which this life has been formed, was not discovered till it was too late to introduce it in its proper place:

“ Dec. 19, 1679.

“ Last night, Mr. Dryden, the famous poet, going from a Coffee-house in Covent-Garden, was set upon by three persons unknown to him, and so rudely by them handled, that, as it is said, his life is in no small danger. It is thought to have been the effect of private grudge, rather than upon the too common design of unlawful gain: an unkind trespass, by which not only he himself, but the commonwealth of learning, may receive an injury.”

lived with him on very amicable terms. From traditional accounts, which have been well authenticated, it appears, that his kinsman was a man of amiable manners, extremely benevolent, and highly deserving of the praises lavished upon him in this Epistle; in which the description of an honest English Member of Parliament was intended, as Dryden himself informs us,⁸ not only as a portrait of his worthy relation, but as a memorial to posterity of the author's principles. His kinsman's sister, Honour Driden,⁹ who lived with him, and whom we have seen our author had wooed in his younger days, gave an additional attraction to the house of Chesterton, which he often visited in his latter years.

In the common accounts of the family of Dryden, it has been related, that this gentleman and four of his brothers entered into a vow never to marry; but Lady Dryden, the widow of the last Sir John Dryden, used to say, (probably from the information of her husband, who died in March, 1770,

⁸ See his Letter to the Right Hon. Charles Montague.

⁹ This lady, who according to the tradition of her own family, was extremely sensible and engaging, continued single all her life, in consequence of an early disappointment. After her brother's death, she removed to Shrewsbury, where she lived for some years with her elder sister, Anne, the widow of Walter Pigott, Esq. of Chetwynd, in Shropshire. They were both remarkable for charity and piety, and fasting in Lent with great strictness. Honour Driden died some years after her brother, and was buried in St. Chad's church in Shrewsbury.

at the age of sixty-seven,) that this circumstance had been erroneously ascribed to these gentlemen, by Collins, in his *Baronetage*, or whoever furnished him with that anecdote; and that in truth it belonged to another family in Northamptonshire.—Mr. John Driden survived our author above seven years, and by his last will, among numerous legacies to various relations, bequeathed five hundred pounds to our poet's son, Charles; but he having died before the testator, it became a lapsed legacy: and it has been a constant tradition in the family of Pigott, descended from one of the sisters of this gentleman, that in return for the immortality conferred on him by his kinsman's verses, he

' The will of Mr. John Driden of Chesterton, which is not in the Prerogative-office, was "sealed, delivered, and published the 2d of January, 1707," three days only before the death of the testator. At that time Charles Dryden was dead; but this will, by which a very large real and personal property was disposed of, was doubtless drawn up some years before: for it begins thus:—"The last Will and Testament of John Driden of Chesterton, in the county of Huntingdon, Esq., made in the day of _____;" blanks being left for the date, which were never filled up: and it contains other proofs that the testator did not, when it was written, account himself near death.—Of this will his sister Honour, his brother Erasmus, and his nephew Robert Pigott, were made executors.

Beside legacies to various persons, amounting to about sixteen thousand pounds, he bequeathed the George Inn at Northampton to trustees, to found a school for the children of the poor of that town; a circumstance re-

presented him with the sum of £.500. A fine portrait of our author, painted by Kneller,^a which

corded in the following inscription on a white marble tablet, set up in the front of that Inn, by his nephew and heir, Robert Pigott :

JOHANNES DRIDEN, ar.

Ashbeizæ Canonicorum

In hoc agro natus,

Vir gravis, probus, sagax, colendus,

PANDOCHÆUM hoc quod spectas magnificum,

in natalis patriæ ornamentum et decus

Ingenti sumptu statim ab incendio struxit ;

et moriens anno 1707^o ad

ΠΤΟΧΟΔΙΑΔΕΞΑΛΕΙΟΝ fundandum

optabili exemplo piè legavit.

Dedisce jam, lector, culpæ tempora ;

At Northamptoniæ felici gratulare, ubi cernis

Tantum virtutis, morum, religionis,

ex ipsa vel caupona procreari.

Lapidem hunc beneficii indicem

Robertus Pigott, R. P.

^a The family of Pigott in Shropshire, ever since their connexion with our author's kinsman, have had a child christened by the name of Dryden ; but not one of them has arrived to maturity.

^a The poet in this portrait, which is a half-length, wears a large wig, and holds a sprig of laurel in his hand. It remained in the house of Chesterton till about the year 1777, when the estate was sold to — Waller, Esq. by the late Robert Pigott, Esq. grandson of Robert Pigott above mentioned ; about which time this portrait was removed from the old mansion where it had so long hung, and the owner of it, Mrs. Frances Pigott, of Bath, (for it was bequeathed to her by her father,) has not been able since to discover into whose hands it has fallen.

till about twenty years ago decorated the house of Chesterton, was perhaps an interchange of civility on his part, on that occasion.—That some valuable donation was made to Dryden in return for these animated verses, I have no doubt; but in traditional anecdotes of this kind, transmitted by oral communication, minute accuracy is seldom found. It seems much more probable, that the gift was one hundred pounds; for the receipt of so large a sum as five hundred pounds, in 1699, or early in the following year, to which period this transaction must be referred, seems inconsistent with those distressed circumstances in which we know the poet died soon afterwards; more especially if a similar story concerning the bounty of the Duchess of Ormond be authentick.

The volume of *FABLES* being nearly printed in December, 1699, waited only for that lively and pleasing Preface which he prefixed to it; and the work, thus completed, was published early in March, 1699-1700,¹ with a Dedication in prose to the Duke of Ormond, and another in verse to Mary, the second Duchess of Ormond, for

¹ In a letter to Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas, written December 29, 1699, he says, that the *FABLES* will be published *within a month*. The earliest advertisement of their publication, however, which I have found, is in *THE FLYING POST, or THE POST-MASTER*, No. 753, Thursday March 7, 1699-1700, when the book (in folio) probably first appeared; and it was sold, as we learn from the letter above mentioned, for twelve shillings.

which she is said to have rewarded the writer with a present of five hundred pounds: but in this case, as in the former, I am inclined to read *one* instead of *five*, for the reason already assigned. To gratify the curious reader, the pieces of Chaucer which had been modernized were subjoined to the volume, in their primitive form: but a perfect edition of this most popular, and perhaps the happiest, of all our author's poetical performances, except his Musick-Ode, remains yet to be given; in which the most splendid passages of the original should be compared with the copy, and the judicious retrenchments, as well as the beautiful amplifications, made by Dryden in various places, should be distinctly pointed out.

It has, without reason, been mentioned as a subject of admiration, that in the middle of the reign of Charles the Second only fifteen hundred copies of PARADISE LOST should have been sold in seven years. The slow progress of this last great performance of Dryden is much more extraordinary; for a second edition of the FABLES, of which probably not more than one thousand copies were printed, was not called for till thirteen years after the death of the author; when Anne, Lady Sylvius, (a daughter of one of Lady Elizabeth Dryden's brothers,) taking out letters of administration to him, received from Tonson the sum which then became due, agreeably to the original contract. So different is the present state of literature from what it was in the beginning of this century, that there can be little doubt, if such a work were now for

the first time to appear, the whole of the impression would be sold in a twelvemonth.

At this time Betterton, who in 1695 had seceded from Drury-Lane to the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, finding that the modern plays did not fill his treasury, called in the aid of Shakspeare; and revived the first part of KING HENRY THE FOURTH, in which he performed the part of Falstaff, with considerable success.⁴ Soon afterwards MEASURE FOR MEASURE was altered by Gildon, and produced at the same theatre, with the aid of a Masque, and the attraction of Purcell's musick. To comply with the fashion of the day, Vanbrugh, then an officer, who had already acquired considerable reputation by two plays, THE RELAPSE and THE PROVOKED WIFE, and appears to have been one of the numerous band of accomplished

⁴ "The Wits of all qualities (says a contemporary,) have lately entertained themselves with a revived humour of Sir John Falstaff, in Henry the Fourth, which has drawn all the town more than any new play that has bin produced of late; which shews that Shakspeare's wit will always last: and the criticks allow that Mr. Betterton has hitt the humour of Falstaff better than any that have aimed at it before." Letter from Mr. Villiers Bathurst to Dr. Arthur Charlett, Master of University College, in Oxford, dated Bond-strect, January 28, 1699-1700. —Ballard's MSS. in Bibl. Bodl. vol. xxxiii. p. 64.—The writer, who was son of George Bathurst, Esq. and uncle to Pope's friend and correspondent, the first Earl Bathurst, died and was buried at Chelsea, Sept. 9, 1711.

young men with whom Dryden lived in great intimacy, revised Fletcher's comedy entitled *THE PILGRIM*, for the company of actors who, after Betterton's departure, continued to play in Drury-Lane; with whom he stipulated that our author should have the benefit of the third night's performance,¹ in consideration of his having enriched the piece with a Prologue and Epilogue, a Dialogue between two mad lovers, and other additions. The precise time of its first representation has not been recorded by the writers of theatrical history; nor have I been able to ascertain it, from

¹ It is not easy to ascertain the exact time when this revived play was first performed. Cibber in his *APOLOGY*, p. 219, says, "it was revived in 1700 for Dryden's benefit, in his declining age and fortune:" and afterwards adds, that "Sir John Vanbrugh, who had given some slight touches of his pen to *THE PILGRIM*, to assist the benefit-day of Dryden, had the disposal of the parts," and assigned to him that of the stuttering Cook, and the speaking of the Epilogue; and that "Dryden upon hearing him repeat it, made him a further compliment of trusting him with the Prologue also."—From this account it might be presumed that the play was performed in Dryden's life-time, on the day for which I suppose it to have been intended, March 25th, 1700. The last speech, however, of the printed play speaks of him as dead: "I hope, before you go, Sir, you'll share with us an entertainment the *late* great poet of our age prepared, to celebrate this day. Let the Masque begin."—But even these words are not decisive; for the word *late* might have been written subsequent to the first representation, and added to the *printed* copy, which was published on the 18th of June, as appears from the following

the newspapers of the time; but doubtless it was intended to have been produced on the 25th of March, 1700, on which day the new year at that

advertisement in the London Gazette, No. 3610, Monday June 17, 1700:

"To-morrow will be published *THE PILGRIM*, a comedy, as it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane; written originally by Mr. Fletcher, and now very much altered, with several additions: likewise a Prologue, Epilogue, Dialogue, and Masque, written by the late Mr. Dryden, just before his death; being the last of his works. Printed for B. Tooke," &c.

Gildon, in his *COMPARISON BETWEEN THE STAGES*, published in 1702, says, this play was performed for the benefit of Dryden's son, and that it was brought out after *HENRY THE FOURTH* and *MEASURE FOR MEASURE* (which last he himself altered,) had been acted at Lincoln's-Inn Fields. The latter was produced probably in February. After having mentioned the success of *HENRY THE FOURTH* and *HENRY THE EIGHTH*, he makes one of the speakers in his Dialogue say, "The battle continued a long time doubtful, and victory hovering over both camps, Betterton solicits for some auxiliaries from the same author, and then he flanks his enemy with *MEASURE FOR MEASURE*. . . . Nay then, says the whole party at Drury-Lane, we'll even put *THE PILGRIM* upon him." 'Ay, 'faith, so we will,' says Dryden: 'and if you'll let my son have the profits of the third night, I'll give you a Secular Masque.' 'Done,' says the House; and so the bargain was struck."

One of Curll's authors, in the *Memoirs of Mrs. Oldfield* published in 1731, says, that "*THE PILGRIM* was revived for the benefit of Mr. Dryden in *Ann. 1700*; but he dying on the third night of its representation, his son

time began ; for our author, beside the aid already mentioned, furnished the scene with a *Secular Masque*, introduced at the end of the piece ; in which the commencement of the year is particularly mentioned.⁶ It is a singular circumstance

attended the run of it, and the advantages accrued to his family." According to this account, its first representation was on Monday the 29th of April. But I do not believe this to have been the case.

⁶ The Masque commences with the following speeches :

JANUS. Chronos, Chronos, mend thy pace ;
An hundred times the rolling Sun
 Around the radiant belt has run,
 In his revolving race :
 Behold, behold, the goal in sight !
 Spread thy fans, and wing thy flight !

Enter CHRONOS, with a scythe in his hand, and a great globe on his back, which he sets down at his entrance.

CHRONOS. Weary, weary of my weight,
 Let me, let me drop my freight,
 And leave the world behind ;
 I could not bear,
Another year,
 The load of human-kind.

The name of the original composer of this Masque is not recorded ; but probably Daniel Purcell was employed on this occasion. At a subsequent period, as Dr. Burney mentions, it was set to musick by Dr. Boyce, and performed, in still life, at either the Castle Concert or Hickford's Great Room in Brewer-street. In 1749 it was performed at Drury-Lane Theatre with great success ; and the Song sung by Diana, beginning—" With horns and with hounds I waken the day," continued long a popular air.

that Dryden, as well as some other eminent men of that day, should have fallen into the error respecting the beginning of the century, which has found some partisans in our own time; conceiving that the seventeenth century closed on the 24th of March, 1699, and that the new century began on the following day: in conformity to which notion a splendid Jubilee was celebrated at Rome in the year 1700. By this kind of reckoning, the second century began in the year 100; and the first, in opposition to the decisive evidence furnished by the word itself, consisted of only *ninety-nine* years! Prior, however, was guilty of the same oversight.¹

For whatever day this Masque may have been written, it should seem from the last speech of the comedy in which it was introduced, that it was not acted till after Dryden's death. The Prologue and Epilogue, in the former of which he has retaliated on Blackmore,² for his recent attack in the

¹ See his *CARMEN SECULARE* for the year 1700.

² See vol. iii. p. 649.—It is not quite clear, whether a passage in our author's Preface to his *FABLES*, in which he speaks of Blackmore's having traduced him *in a libel*, relates to the *SATIRE AGAINST WIT*, or to Blackmore's Preface to *PRINCE ARTHUR*, published in 1695. Dr. Johnson thought it related to the former; and, I believe, was right in his conjecture: for from an advertisement in the *POSTBOY*, No. 763, February 29, 1699-1700, it appears, that a satirical production entitled "*COMMENDATORY VERSES on the Author of the two ARTHURS, and the SATIRE AGAINST WIT*," was then published; *THE VOL. I.*³

SATIRE AGAINST WIT, have been always numbered among his happiest effusions, and would at any period of his life have been highly admired. It is a singular circumstance, (which I have learned

SATIRE AGAINST WIT, therefore, probably appeared early in January, two months *before* the **FABLES**. The *third* edition of Blackmore's poem was published April 20, 1700.

"The libel," says Dr. Johnson, in "which Blackmore traduced him, was a **SATIRE UPON [AGAINST] WIT**; in which, having lamented the exuberance of false wit, and the deficiency of true, he proposes that all wit should be re-coined before it is current, and appoints masters of assay, who shall reject all that is light or debased.

" 'Tis true, that when the coarse and worthless dross
 " Is purg'd away, there will be mighty loss;
 " Ev'n Congreve, Southerne, manly Wycherley,
 " When thus refined, will grievous sufferers be:
 " Into the melting-pot when **DRYDEN** comes,
 " What horrid stench will rise, what noisome fumes!
 " How will he shrink, when all his lewd allay
 " And wicked mixture shall be purg'd away!"

"Thus stands the passage in the last edition; but in the original there was an abatement of the censure, beginning thus:

" But what remains, will be so pure, 'twill bear
 " Th' examination of the most severe."

"Blackmore finding the censure resented, and the civility disregarded, ungenerously omitted the softer part. Such variations discover a writer who consults his passions more than his virtue; and it may be reasonably supposed that Dryden imputes his enmity to its true cause:" [his having been *a little hard on Blackmore's fanatick patrons in the city of London, in ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL.*]

while this sheet was passing through the press,) that these two animated compositions should have been written not above three weeks before his death. The *PILGRIM*, which was graced with these latest productions of our author's muse, is also memorable for being the first play in which Mrs. Oldfield, who afterwards became so celebrated, was distinguished as an actress.*

The end of all his labours was now approaching. He had for some years been harassed by the gravel and the gout; and in December, 1699, was afflicted with an erysipelas in one of his legs.† Having recovered, however, from that disorder, he was sufficiently free from any complaint to apply again to his studies, as is evinced by the poetical

* She was so much admired in the part of Alinda, in this play, that she chose it for her benefit-night. The advertisement in *THE POSTBOY* of Saturday, July 6, 1700, in which it was announced, shews the state of the stage at that time :

" For the Benefit of Mrs. OLDFIELD,

" This day, at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, will be performed a comedy called *THE PILGRIM*: revised with large alterations and additions, and a Secular Masque: with the Dialogue between the two mad lovers: Being acted this time at the desire of several persons of quality: And Entertainments of singing and dancing between the Acts, and in particular a new Entry by the late Mr. Englesfield, and performed by Mr. Weaver, Mr. Cottin, and Miss Champion; a Scotch Song, with the dance of the bonny Highlander: never done but once before on the English Stage."

† See his *Letter to Mrs. Thomas*; dated Dec. 29, 1699.

performances which have been just mentioned ; but he was confined to his house by the gout during the greater part of March and April ; and near the end of that month, in consequence of neglecting an inflammation in one of his feet, a mortification ensued, of which he died, after a very short illness,* at three o'clock on Wednesday morning, May the 1st, 1700.[†]

His leg having become mortified, his surgeon recommended an amputation of the limb, with a

* That his illness was short, and his death sudden and unexpected, appears from the following introductory paragraph to an account of his funeral, written by Edward Ward, in *THE LONDON SPY*, soon afterwards :

" A deeper concern hath scarce been known to affect in general the minds of grateful and ingenious men, than the melancholy *surprise* of the worthy Mr. Dryden's death hath occasioned through the whole town, as well as in all other parts of the kingdom, where any persons either of wit or learning have taken up their residence."

His illness was not noticed in any of the newspapers, that I have seen, till the 30th of April, when *THE POSTBOY* announced, that " John Dryden, Esq., the famous poet, lies a dying."

[†] In *THE POSTBOY*, from Tuesday, April 30, to Thursday, May 2, 1700, his death was thus announced :

" Yesterday morning at three of the clock, John Dryden, Esq., departed this life, who for his poetry, &c. excelled all others this age produced."

Dr. Birch, in the *GENERAL DICTIONARY*, following an erroneous inscription inserted by Pope in his Works, 1735, stated, that Dryden died in 1701 ; and in the *BIOGRAPHIA BRITANNICA*, and the subsequent collections of English biography, this error has been adopted.

view to stop the further progress of the disorder ; but he would not undergo the operation, saying, that as by the course of nature he had not many years to live, he would not attempt to prolong an uncomfortable existence by a painful and uncertain experiment, but patiently submit to death.⁴ This

4. " The occasion of his sickness (says Ward, *ubi supra*,) was a lameness in one of his feet, springing from so trivial a cause as the flesh growing over one of his toe-nails, which, being neglected, begot a soreness, and brought an inflammation in his toe ; and being a man of a gross body, a flux of humours falling into the part, made it very troublesome,—that he was forced to put himself into the hands of an able surgeon, who foreseeing the danger of a mortification, advised him to part with the toe affected, as the best means to prevent the ill consequence likely to ensue ; which he refused to consent to, believing a cure might be effected by less severe means than the loss of a member ; till at last his whole leg gangrened, which was presently followed by a mortification, so that nothing remained to prevent death, but an amputation of the member thus putrified, which he refused to consent to, saying," &c. His Surgeon, we know, was Mr. Hobbes, a very famous operator, whose skill and care he has acknowledged in the Postscript to his Virgil.

On this account, which was printed in 1703, if not before, Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas, whose talents for invention were not inconsiderable, above twenty years afterwards, formed the following story ; into which, for the better grace, and to give her narrative the genuine air of authenticity, she has introduced several *small* circumstances :

" On the 19th of April, 1700, he said he had been very bad with the gout, and an erysipelas in one leg, but he was then very well, and designed to go soon abroad :

account, which was given by a contemporary writer, not long afterwards, is strongly corroborated

but on the *Friday* following, [April 26th,] he had eat a *partridge* for supper; and going to take a turn in the little garden behind his house, [we must suppose, by *moonlight*, for on the 26th of April it was certainly dark after supper,] was seized with a violent pain under the *ball* of the *great* toe of his *right* foot; that, unable to stand, he cried out for help, and was carried in by his *servants*; when, upon sending for *surgeons*, they found a small black spot in the place affected. He submitted to their present applications; and when gone, called his son, Charles, to him, using *these words*: 'I know,' says he, 'this black spot is a mortification; I know also that it will seize my *head*, and that they will cut off my leg; but I command you, my son, by your filial duty, that you do not suffer me to be dismembered.' As he too truly foretold, the event proved, and his son was too dutiful to disobey his father's commands." Letter to the author of the *Memoirs of Congreve*, 8vo. 1730.—The reader will very soon be furnished with such decisive proofs of this lady's inventive faculties and disregard for truth, as will leave no doubt that this story is a mere fiction.—She has, it is observable, furnished our author with a train of servants, though, in his correspondence with Tonson, he mentions only his *footboy*; and she has been equally lavish of surgical assistance. As for the words, which, she tells us, he spoke on this occasion, if she had been sitting by his bed-side, she could not have been more precise.

Ward's account is in part confirmed by the following lines in an *Elegy on Dryden*, written by Gildon soon after his death:

- " His body old, his wit continued young ;
- " Weak were his limbs, his lines robust and strong ;
- " In winter, as in spring, this warbling swan still sung. }

rated by the unquestionable testimony of Mrs. Elizabeth Creed, his kinswoman ; who informs us, that he received the notice of his approaching

" If health be harmony, the wonder's great,	}
" How discord-sickness should admittance get,	
" Where harmony itself had placed her regal seat.	
" Disease in vain had oft the fortress storm'd ;	
" With harmony divine as oft it found it arm'd.	
" Repulse upon repulse enraged to find,	
" Now on new arts she bent her deadly mind :	
" She watch'd each chance, to level with the ground	
" A fort so long impregnable she'd found :	
" Malicious chance a fatal breach had made,	}
" Too small, indeed, without dire gangrene's aid,	
" For death to enter with its stern brigade."	

In a note the writer remarks, that Dryden died of a *gangrene*. EXAMEN MISCELLANEUM, 8vo. 1702.

' Mrs. Elizabeth Creed, who was second-cousin to our author's children, was the only daughter of Sir Gilbert Pickering, Baronet, (of whom an ample account has been given in a former page,) by Elizabeth, the only daughter of Sir Sidney Montagu, Knight, and sister of Edward Montagu, first Earl of Sandwich. She was born in the year 1642, and was married to John Creed of Oundle, Esq., " a wise, learned, and pious man," (as she has herself informed us, in an inscription in the church of Tichmarsh,) " who served his Majesty King Charles the Second in diverse honourable employments at home and abroad ; lived with honour, and died lamented, A. D. 1701."—By this gentleman she had eleven children, six of whom died in their infancy. Of the survivors, Richard, the eldest, who was a Major in the army, highly distinguished himself at the battle of Blenheim, where he commanded one of the squadrons that began the attack. In

dissolution with perfect resignation and submission to the Divine Will; and that in his last illness he

two several charges he was unhurt, but in the third he received many wounds; notwithstanding which he continued to fight, till he was shot through the head by a cannon ball. His dead body was brought off the field by his brother John, at the hazard of his own life; and a monument was afterwards erected in Westminster Abbey in memory of the gallant services of Major Richard Creed, on which the inscription (written probably by his mother) informs us, that "he attended King William in all his wars, and was never more himself than when he looked an enemy in the face." His mother erected another monument to him in the church of Tichmarsh.

This very amiable and respectable lady, as I have been informed by her great grandson, William Walcot, jun. Esq., "during her widowhood, resided many years in a mansion-house at Barnwell, near Oundle, in Northamptonshire, belonging to the Montagu family, where she amused and employed herself in painting, and instructing many young women in drawing, fine needle-works, and other elegant arts. Many of the churches in the neighbourhood of Oundle are decorated with altar-pieces, monuments, and ornaments of different kinds, the works of her hand; and her descendants are possessed of many portraits, and some good pictures, painted by her. Two days in every week she constantly allotted to the publick; on one, she was visited by all the nobility and gentry who resided near her; on the other, she received and relieved all the afflicted and diseased of every rank, giving them food, raiment, or medicine, according to their wants. Her reputation in the administration of medicine was considerable; and as she afforded it *gratis*, her practice was of course extensive. Her piety was great and unaffected. That it was truly sincere, was evinced by the

took the most tender and affectionate farewel of his afflicted friends, " of which sorrowful number

magnanimity with which she endured many trials more heavily afflictive than what usually fall to the lot even of those whose life is prolonged to so great an extent."

In 1722 Mrs. Creed, then in her eightieth year, erected a monument in the church of Tichmarsh, to the memory of our author and his ancestors; for which she wrote the Inscription, (containing the passage in the text,) which will be found at length in a subsequent page. She died at Oundle about three years afterwards, in the beginning of the year 1724-5, and her remains were removed to Tichmarsh, where she was buried with her ancestors.

This excellent woman having borne so honourable and kind a testimony to the tenderness, fortitude, and piety, of our author, in the last scene of his life, is entitled to particular respect from his biographer. It is therefore with great satisfaction that I have endeavoured to rescue her name from oblivion, (for she who was so zealous in recording the merits of others, remains herself without a monument;) and that, as a further proof of her virtues, I add an eulogy on her, which has been obligingly communicated to me by Mr. Walcot:

" Conversation one day after dinner, at Mrs. Creed's, running upon the or[igin of names], Mr. Dryden bowed to the good old lady, and spoke extempore the f[ollowing verses]:

" So much religion in *your* name doth dwell,

" Your soul must needs with piety excell.

" Thus names, like [well-wrought] pictures drawn of old,

" Their owners' nature and their story told.—

" Your name but half expresses; for in you

" Belief and practice do together go.

she herself was one."⁶ Twenty-two years afterwards this very respectable lady, who was then in her eightieth year, erected a monument at Tichmarsh, in honour of our poet and his parents, on which these circumstances so much to his honour are recorded.

He died in the profession of the Roman Catholic religion, which he had embraced about fifteen years before. From an ambiguous passage in *THE GUARDIAN*, it has been suggested, that this great poet did not believe in a future state;⁷ but

" My prayers shall be, while this short life endures,

" These may go hand in hand, with you and yours ;

" Till faith hereafter is in vision drown'd,

" And practice is with endless glory crown'd."

These verses, as well as the introductory account of the occasion that gave rise to them, are copied from an original paper now before me, written in an elegant female hand (probably that of one of her daughters); which was found in the cabinet of Mrs. Mary Walcot, late wife of William Walcot, of Oundle, M. D. and grand-daughter to Mrs. Elizabeth Creed; being the daughter of John Creed, Esq., her brave son abovementioned, who died at Oundle, Nov. 21, 1751, in his seventy-third year.—Part of this paper having been worn away by time, I have supplied by conjecture the few words enclosed within crotchets, which appear wanting. The word within crotchets in the third verse, or some other word of two syllables, seems to have been inadvertently omitted in the original transcript.

⁶ See APPENDIX, No. IV.

⁷ The passage alluded to in *THE GUARDIAN*, No. 39, is as follows :

" It must be my business to prevent all pretenders in

the excellent author of the paper alluded to, Bishop Berkeley, seems to have fallen into a slight

this kind [men of parts, who oppose the received opinions of Christians] from hurting the ignorant and unwary. In order to this, I communicated [in No. 27, also written by Bishop Berkeley,] an intelligence which I received, of a gentleman's appearing very sorry that he was not well during a late fit of sickness, contrary to his own doctrine, which obliged him to be merry upon that occasion, except he was sure of recovering. Upon this advice to the world, the following advertisement got a place in THE POSTBOY :

· Whereas in the paper called THE GUARDIAN, of
· Saturday the 11th of April instant, a corollary reflection
· was made on Monsieur D[eslandes], a member of the
· Royal Academy of Sciences in Paris, author of a book
· lately published, entitled

· A Philological Essay, or Reflections on the death of
· Free-thinkers, with the characters of the most eminent
· persons of both sexes, ancient and modern, that died
· pleasantly and unconcerned, &c. Sold by J. Baker,
· in Paternoster-Row :

· Suggesting as if that gentleman, now in London, was
· very much out of humour in a late fit of sickness, till he
· was in a fair way of recovery. This is to assure the
· publick, that the said gentleman never expressed the
· least concern at the approach of death, but expected the
· fatal minute with the most heroical and philosophical
· resignation ; of which a copy of verses he writ in the
· serene intervals of his distemper, is an invincible proof.'

" All that I contend for is, that this gentleman was out of humour when he was sick ; and the Advertiser, to confute me, says, that in *the serene intervals of his distemper*, that is, when he was not sick, *he writ verses*. I shall not retract my advertisement, till I see those verses,

errour, by confounding Lucretius and his translator; and to have made Dryden accountable for

and I'll choose what to believe then, except they are underwritten by his Nurse, nor then neither, except she is an housekeeper. I must tie this gentleman close to the argument; for if he had not actually his fit upon him, there is nothing courageous in the thing, nor does it make for his purpose, nor are they heroick verses.

"The point of being merry at the hour of death is a matter that ought to be settled by Divines; but the publisher of the Philological Essay produces his chief authorities from Lucretius, the Earl of Rochester, and Mr. JOHN DRYDEN, who were gentlemen that did not think themselves obliged to prove all they said, or else proved their assertions by saying or swearing they were all fools that believed in the contrary. If it be absolutely necessary that a man should be facetious at his death, it would be very well, if these gentlemen, Monsieur D[eslandes] and Mr. B[oyer], would repent betimes, and not trust to a death-bed ingenuity. By what has appeared hitherto, they have only raised our longing to see their posthumous works.

"The author of *Poeta rusticantis litteratum Otium* is but a mere phraseologist; the philological publisher is but a translator; but I expected better usage from Mr. Abel Roper, [the publisher of THE POSTBOY,] who is an original."

I do not at this moment recollect by whom this passage is quoted, as a proof of our author's irreligion and levity in the hour of death; but the remarker, as well as the Bishop, were certainly under a misapprehension; for the only ground for such a charge, which is found in Deslandes' work, is, Dryden's version of certain passages of Lucretius being quoted in it.

André-Francois Boureau Deslandes was born in Pon-

opinions with which he had no other concern than that of clothing them with English verse. Bishop Tanner, then a young man, residing chiefly at Oxford, also speaks of him very uncharitably.⁸ But these vague and unsupported censures must yield to his own declarations, confirmed by the general probity of his life,⁹ and the testimony of

dichery, in 1690, and came to London in 1713, where he was seized with the small pox. He in that year published in London his *Litteratum Otium*, in which he has very successfully imitated Catullus; and had previously printed at Paris—*Reflexions sur les grands-hommes qui sont morts en plaisantant*, the work here alluded to, which was translated by A. Boyer. He afterwards went to France, where he resided many years; and, after having published his *Travels into England*, (1717, 2^{mo}.) *L'Art de se desennuyer*, and various works of a similar irreligious tendency with that reprobated in THE GUARDIAN, he died at Paris in 1757. His friends *boasted* that he persevered in infidelity to the last; as a proof of which they preserved the following despicable verses, written a short time before his death:

"Doux sommeil, dernier terme,

"Que le sage attend sans effroi;

"Je verrai d'un œil ferme

"Tout passer, tout s'enfuir de moi."

⁸ In a letter, from which an extract will be found in a subsequent page.

⁹ In the Preface to *TYRANNICK LOVE*, 1670, having observed that he had been charged by some ignorant or malicious persons with profaneness and irreligion, for having produced the character of Maximin; after vindicating himself from this accusation, he adds—"This, reader, is what I owed to my just defence, and the due

his pious kinswoman ; from which it may be collected, that the fortitude and resignation which he displayed in his last moments were the effect of religious principles, a perfect conviction of the truths of Christianity, and an humble hope of being made partaker of a blessed immortality.

reverence of that religion which I profess, to which all men who desire to be esteemed good or honest, are obliged. I have neither leisure nor occasion to write more largely on this subject, because I am already justified - - - by the witness of my own conscience, which abhors the thought of such a crime ; to which I ask leave to add my outward conversation, which shall never be justly taxed with the note of atheism or profaneness."

Again, in his Letter to Dennis, in March, 1693-4 :

" We poor poets militam (to use Mr. Cowley's expression,) are at the mercy of wretched scriblers ; and when they cannot fasten upon our verses, they fall upon our morals, our principles of state and religion. For my principles of religion, I will not justify them to you : I know, yours are far different. For the same reason, I shall say nothing of my principles of state. I believe you in yours follow the dictates of your reason, as I in mine do those of my conscience. If I thought myself in an error, I would retract it. I am sure that I suffer for them ; and Milton makes even the Devil say, that no creature is in love with pain.—For my morals betwixt man and man, I am not to be my own judge. I appeal to the world, if I have deceived or defrauded any man ; and for my private conversation, they who see me every day can be the best witnesses, whether or no it be blameless and inoffensive. Hitherto I have no reason to complain that men of either party shun my company."

A false account of the funeral of this great poet having been circulated and believed for near seventy years, it is become necessary minutely to examine and refute it. It first made its appearance thirty years after Dryden's death, in some *Memoirs of Congreve*, published by Curll, and ascribed by him to Charles Wilson, Esq.,¹ probably a fictitious person: but the original fabricator of this curious tissue of falshood was Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas, a gentlewoman of good birth, and some talents, who had become acquainted with our author about six months before his death, and had been honoured by him with the title of CORINNA,² and with three letters, which will be found in this volume. From her nativity now before me, which may be presumed to have been cast by Dryden's order, it appears, that she was born on the 30th of August, 1675; and being in London at the time of his death, she must have been well acquainted with all the circumstances respecting his last illness and his funeral, to

¹ The writer perhaps was Oldmixon. These *Memoirs* are dedicated to his patron, George Duckett, Esq.

² She appears to have become acquainted with Dryden in November, 1699, in consequence of sending him some of her verses for his perusal. In a letter written to her in that month, he says—"Since you do me the favour to desire a name from me, take that of CORINNA, if you please; I mean not the lady with whom Ovid was in love, but the famous Theban poetess, who overcame Pindar five times, as Historians tell us."

which the notice and countenance that he had shewn her, would naturally draw her attention. She did not therefore exhibit to the world this spurious tale from ignorance or error, but with a full and perfect consciousness that every part of her relation was false. The only excuse that can be made for her is, that at the time of writing it she was in the Fleet Prison, in great poverty and distress; and that she was induced probably by some small sum of money to furnish Curll with this fictitious narrative.¹ But however light and venial such

¹ Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas was the daughter of Emmanuel Thomas, of the Inner Temple, Esq., Barrister at Law, who died when she was an infant. Her mother, according to her own account, was a daughter of William Osborne, Esq., of Sittingbourne, in Kent.

In some Memoirs of her Life, written by herself, and published by Curll in the year 1731, are the following curious circumstances. Her father was so affluent, that he kept his *chariot*! [not long after the Restoration!] The pall at his funeral, in 1677, was supported by "six right honourables;" and one hundred and thirty mourning rings, of 20s. each, were given away on that occasion.—When she was an infant, she never could endure to lie in a cradle.—After the death of Lady Henrietta Wentworth, [1686,] the Countess Dowager of Wentworth [unluckily there was no such person, though there might have been a Countess Dowager of Cleaveland, Lady Henrietta's grand-mother, and there was Lady Wentworth, her mother,] having, as she said, lost her *child*, offered to take Elizabeth Thomas into her house, and to educate and provide for her; to which her mother refused to consent. The Countess, resenting this refusal, would never afterwards

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offences may appear to the dealers in fiction, mankind are too well acquainted with the value of

see either of them ; and "*dying in a few years, left £.1500 per annum inheritance at Stepney, to her chambermaid.*"

Philadelphia, Lady Wentworth, Lady of the manor of Stepney, I find, died in April, 1696, *ten years* after her daughter, (the celebrated Lady Henrietta Wentworth, Baroness of Nettlested, and mistress of the Duke of Monmouth,) for whom she ordered a monument to be erected in the church of Tuddington, in Bedfordshire, of not less than £.2,000 value ; which, by the neglect of those to whom the Earl of Cleaveland's estate has since devolved, is now hastening fast to decay. Her will, which was made April 2, 1696, and proved, May 4, following. (Pr. Off. Bond, qu. 84.) contains no such devise as that above mentioned. She bequeathed about £.10,000 in legacies to various noble relations and friends ; £.200 to her servant, Mrs. Mary *Fanningham*, and £.330 to other servants ; and she made her executors, Sir Robert Howard and two other gentlemen, her residuary legatees. By her will she confirmed, and appropriated a fund for the payment of, certain legacies bequeathed by her daughter ; among which was, an annuity of £.100 for her life, "to Mrs. *Flanningham*," who probably had been Lady Henrietta Wentworth's servant, and was the same person to whom she herself bequeathed £.200, though, perhaps, by a mistake in the transcript of this will, there is a slight variation in the names.—Here we have the germ of Mrs. Thomases fiction.

Her mother, in 1684, retiring with her daughter, for cheapness, to some place in Surrey, (she does not tell us where,) became acquainted with Dr. Glisson, [an eminent physician,] then (as she informs us) "*near a hundred years of age.*" At his last visit to them, this gentleman

integrity and truth, in all human dealings, not to hold the whole tribe of impostors and forgers of

having drawn on "*a pair of rich Spanish leather gloves, embossed on the backs and tops with gold embroidery, and fringed round with gold plate,*" he was asked their history; as "he seemed to touch them with particular respect."

"I do so," returned he; "for the last time I had the honour of approaching my mistress, Queen ELIZABETH, *she pulled them from her own royal hands, saying—'Here, Glisson, wear them for my sake.'* I have done so with veneration, and never drew them on, but when I had a mind to honour those whom I visit, as I now do you: and since thou lovest the memory of my royal mistress, take them, and preserve them carefully, when I am gone!—Too true a prediction! he went home, and *died in a few days!*"

It must be acknowledged that Corinna had a good *sprag* memory; for Dr. Francis Glisson, a celebrated physician and anatomist in the last century, (the person here meant,) died in the year 1677, at which time she was just two years old; but if we allow the speech which she has with great precision given as his, to have come to her by relation from her mother, then we are only to suppose that the Doctor made it seven years after he was dead. "Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind;" for Dr. Glisson, when he died, being in truth just eighty, (and not near one hundred, as she chose to represent him,) must have been born in 1597, and consequently in the last year of Elizabeth's reign, was only *five* years old. Here then we have an account of a very extraordinary phenomenon, well worthy the attention of our curious collectors of rarities;—a pair of gloves of so accommodating a nature, that in spite of their stiffened high tops, they not only equally suited either sex, but by a peculiar power of expansion and contraction exactly

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every kind in abhorrence; and however they may be elated by the praise of ingenuity, or the profits

fitted a boy of five years old, a Queen of seventy, and an old physician of eighty. As they are probably yet forthcoming, the representatives of this lady cannot do better than present them to the gentleman, who, we were frequently assured some time since, was possessed of a curious *whole-length portrait* of our great dramatick poet; as by an easy transition he may convert them into SHAKSPEARE'S GLOVES; with neither of which inestimable treasures, though long and fondly expected, have the eyes of the *steady BELIEVERS* in this kind of trumpery yet been gratified.

In these extraordinary Memoirs we are next presented with the history of a chemical quack, whom the writer calls Dr. Quibus; who, being reduced to poverty, poisoned himself "with so strong a corrosive," that "in a few hours his belly burst, and his bowels gushed out."—"Thus (adds Corinna) ended the life of a poor wretch under the most excruciating dolours, who had ruined many without benefit to himself." We shall hereafter find the very same *excruciating dolours* tormenting our author in his last moments.

Mrs. Thomases mother died in January, 1718-19; and a Mr. Richard Gwinnet, who had promised to marry her, having died about two years before, and by his will bequeathed to her, as she states, six hundred pounds, she was involved in a lawsuit for this sum. Though she prevailed in this suit, she received, (she says,) at the end of several years, only £.213 16s. 0d.; and in 1727, being utterly destitute, she was thrown into the Fleet. Probably, while she was confined there, she sold to Curll, the bookseller, a parcel of Pope's Letters to Henry Cromwell, Esq., which she had by some means procured from that gen-

of successful fraud, detection and disgrace will assuredly at last overtake them.

tleman, with whom she appears to have been intimately acquainted. Curll, in his *Key to the DUNCIAD*, 1728, says, that Mr. Cromwell gave them to her; but in a note on that poem, in 1729, (Book ii. l. 66, "Which Curll's *Corinna*," &c.) Pope thus represents this transaction:

"This name, [*Corinna*,] it seems, was taken by one Mrs. T[homas,] who procured some private letters of Mr. Pope's while almost a boy, to Mr. Cromwell, and sold them, without the consent of *either* of those gentlemen, to Curll, who printed them in 12mo. in 1727. He has discovered her to be the publisher, in his *Key*, p. 11. *But our poet had no thought of reflecting on her in this passage; on the contrary, he has been informed she is a decent woman, and in misfortunes.* We only take this opportunity," &c.—The words in *Italicks* were omitted by Pope, in the subsequent editions; probably in consequence of Curll's informing him in an advertisement at the end of her *Letters and Memoirs*, printed in 1731, (under the title of *PYLADES and CORINNA*,) that she was the author of an abusive pamphlet against him, entitled "*CODRUS, or the DUNCIAD Dissected*," which she published in 1728, under the name of "Mr. Phillips."

For some years after the death of Dryden, she appears to have kept up a friendly intercourse with his family and relations; for she addressed a letter and a paper of verses to his kinswoman, Mrs. Creed, on the death of her daughter *Jemima*, who, I find from a MS. document now before me, was buried at Tichmarsh in February, 1705-6.—Her scheme, however, of gaining some money by a fictitious account of Dryden's funeral, seems to have been formed on her being confined in the Fleet in 1727 (if not before); and probably it was then put into Curll's

This unfortunate woman, it appears from her own account, was put into the Fleet in the year

hands, though he did not think proper to produce it till three years afterwards; in the *Memoirs of Congreve*. This may be collected from a slight circumstance. In a poem on our author's death, which she wrote immediately after that event, (for it appeared in the Collection entitled *LUCTUS BRITANNICI*, published on that occasion, in June, 1700.) are the following lines :

" But ah ! Britannia, thou complain'st too late ;
 " There's no reversing the decrees of fate.
 " In vain we sigh, in vain, alas ! we mourn,
 " Th' illustrious poet never will return :—
 " *All like himself he died ; so calm, so free,*
 " *As none could equal, but his Emily.*"

In 1727, she printed the second edition of her *Poems*, in which this on Dryden is introduced ; but having then probably written the narrative which will be found in a following page, in which she represents him as dying in *excruciating dolours*, she very prudently omitted the last couplet above quoted, with which these *dolours* were completely at variance.

According to her own account, she was put into the Fleet in 1727. Under an Act of Insolvency, a warrant was issued for her release, in June 1729 ; but in consequence of her extreme indigence, she remained in confinement till near the middle of the next year, as appears from the following original letter, written by her in a very neat hand, which was found in a presentation copy of her volume of *Poems*, purchased a few years ago by my friend Mr. Bindley. It has no superscription, but was probably addressed to Sir Joseph Jekyll, Master of the Rolls ; *Your Honour* being the appropriate address to the person

1727, where she continued till near the time of her death in February, 1730-31 ; for though an

filling that high office. In part of the preceding century noblemen were addressed by that title ; but that mode of address, at the time this letter was written, was wholly obsolete. It however might have been directed to the son of a Peer.

“ May it please your Honour,

“ That the most unfortunate of her sex presumes to lay her little offering at your feet ; which, having been accepted by Majesty, [her volume of Poems in 1727 was dedicated to Caroline, Princess of Wales, at this time become Queen,] she flatters her selfe, may afford your Honour, at a leisure hour, some entertainment also.

“ She begs leave to lay her unhappy case before your Honour’s charitable consideration, having bin deprived of a competent fortune by an unjust executor, [George Gwinnet, the elder,] who carried her through Civil and Common Law, Chancery, and the House of Lords ; till length of time consumed the profits of the suit, and she was landed in a prison ; where, for several years, she has suffered more than thought can conceive, or words express. And tho’ she received liberty by the gracious Act in July session, has languished here ever since under extream sickness and want, being so destitute of all necessities, that she is not able to go through the streets, much less can she hope to get into any business, for the support of life, without a few modest fig-leaves to cover her ; which having no means to raise, nor friend or relation living, she is compelled to claim an author’s right,—of presenting her book ; a method she little thought to have used, and is ashamed to own now : but who, oh ! who, can blame a drowning wretch, for laying hold of any branch ?

Act of Insolvency was passed in the middle of the year 1729, from inability, probably, to pay the gaoler's fees, she was confined for near a year afterwards. While she was in the Fleet, she sent a long letter to the pretended author of Congreve's *Life*, dated May 15th, 1729; and afterwards two

" There are but two volumes left of the whole impression, which she has bought at shop price, (as in the title-page,) and is her whole stock to begin the world. She implores your Honour's acceptance of one, and favourable answer by the bearer, towards enabling a poor bird, let out of a cage, to pick up its daily food; which charity will sure find an eternal reward; and that it may, shall be the constant prayer of

" Your Hon"

" Most obedient, and

" *Fleet Prison,*
April 16th, 1730.

" Devoted Servant,

" E. THOMAS.

" That your Honour may not think your compassion abused by an idle creature, accustomed to this practice, I have sent by the bearer some vouchers, being attested copies of the originals, laid before Sir Robert Walpole. Mr. Jodrell, late Clerk of the Parliament, knew my parents, before I was born, and my selfe ever since; and with his son the Counsellor, still living, had the bounty to act for me during the whole ten years' suit, without accepting one fee."

This unfortunate woman, after her release from imprisonment, took a lodging in Fleet-street, where she died a few months afterwards, February 3, 1730-31, and was buried in St. Bride's church-yard, at the expence of Margaret, Lady Delawar, to whom some occasional verses in her volume of poems are addressed.

other letters, on the 16th and 18th of June ; containing, amidst a curious mixture of truth and falsehood, the following account of Dryden's funeral, which has been adopted by all his biographers, and obtained credit for above half a century.

" On the Wednesday morning following, being May-Day, 1700, under the most excruciating dolours,⁴ he died. Dr. Sprat, then Bishop of Rochester, sent on the Thursday to Lady Elizabeth, that he would make a present of the ground, which was £.40.⁵ with all the other Abbey-fees, to his deceased friend.⁶ Lord Halifax⁷ sent also

⁴ Unluckily this lady, in a poem on our author's death, published a few weeks after that event, gives a very different account. See the verses quoted from it—" *All like himself* he died," &c. in p. 353. n. Her first account doubtless was the truth, for it corresponds with that given by Mrs. Creed. Corinna, when she introduced these *excruciating dolours*, forgot, or did not know, that a mortification is attended with no pain.

The poem containing the couplet above referred to, is found in LUCTUS BRITANNICI, 1700, p. 13, where it is printed anonymously, being only said to be written by a *young lady*; but it is ascertained to be the production of Mrs. Thomas, by being also found in her Poems, published by herself in 8vo. in 1727.

⁵ This probably was set down at random, the *whole* of the fees for interment only, independent of the ground which may be required for a monument, not amounting, I have reason to believe, to more than this sum.

⁶ Sprat was not Dryden's friend; on the contrary was an intimate friend of Martin Clifford, who is supposed to

to my Lady and Mr. Charles, that if they would give him leave to bury Mr. Dryden, he would inter him with a private gentleman's funeral, and afterwards bestow *five hundred pounds* on a monument in the Abbey; which, as they had no reason to refuse, they accepted. On the Saturday following¹ the company came; the corpse was put into a *velvet* hearse, and *eighteen mourning coaches* filled with company attending. When, just before they began to move, Lord Jefferies, with some of his rakish companions, coming by, in wine, asked whose funeral? And being told, 'What!' cries he, 'shall Dryden, the greatest honour and ornament of the nation, be buried after this private manner? No, Gentlemen! let all that loved Mr. Dryden, and honour his memory, alight, and join with me in gaining my Lady's consent, to let me have the honour of his interment, which shall be after another manner than this; and I will bestow *a thousand pounds* on a monument in the Abbey for him.' The gentlemen in the coaches, not knowing of the Bishop of Rochester's favour, not of Lord Halifax's generous design, (these two

have assisted the Duke of Buckingham in writing *THE REHEARSAL*.

¹ He was only Mr. Montague, in May, 1700. On the 13th of December in that year, he was created Baron Halifax; and in 1714 obtained an Earldom.

² The body was first carried from his own house for interment, on *Friday* morning; as appears from the order of the College of Physicians, which will be inserted in its proper place.

noble spirits having, out of respect to the family, enjoined Lady Elizabeth and her son to keep their favour concealed to the world, and let it pass for her own expence, &c.) readily *came out of the coaches*, and attended Lord Jefferies up to the lady's bed-side,* who was then sick. He repeated the purport of what he had before said; but she absolutely refusing, he fell on his knees, vowing never to rise till his request was granted.* *The rest of the company*, by his desire, *kneeled also*. She being naturally of a timorous disposition, and then under a sudden surprise, fainted away. As soon as she recovered her speech, she cried, 'No, no.—' 'Enough, gentlemen,' (replied he, rising briskly;) my Lady is very good; she says—Go, go. She repeated her former words with all her strength, but alas, in vain! her feeble voice was lost in their *acclamations of joy*; and Lord Jefferies ordered the hearseman to carry the corpse to Russell's, an undertaker in Cheapside, and leave it there, till he sent orders for the embalment, which, he added, should be *after the royal manner*. His directions were obeyed; the company dispersed; and Lady Elizabeth and Mr. Charles remained inconsolable.

* This lively lady has already said, that the company filled *eighteen* mourning coaches: so we have here *seventy-two* persons, *kneeling*, in a bedchamber, the dimensions of which were probably about eighteen feet by fourteen.

* Here we have a transcript from CLELIA, or PHARAMOND, or some other of the Romances, which Corinna had studied.

“Next morning Mr. Charles waited on Lord Halifax, &c. to excuse his mother and self, by relating the real truth : but neither his Lordship, nor the Bishop, would admit of any plea ; especially the latter, who had *the Abbey lighted, the ground opened, the Choir attending, an Anthem ready set*, and himself waiting for some hours, without any corpse to bury. Russell, after *three days expectation of orders for embalmment*,^{*} without receiving any, waits on Lord Jefferies ; who, pretending ignorance of the matter, turned it off with an ill-natured jest, saying—‘ Those who observed the orders of a drunken frolick, deserved no better ; that he remembered nothing at all of it, and he might do what he pleased with the corpse.’ On this, Mr. Russell waits on Lady Elizabeth and Mr. Dryden ; but alas, it was not in their power to answer. The season was very hot ; the deceased had lived high^{*} and fast ; and being corpulent, and abounding with gross humours, grew very offensive. The Undertaker, in short, threatened to bring home the corpse, and set it before their door. It cannot be easily imagined, what grief, shame, and confusion seized this unhappy family. They begged a day’s

^{*} According to this account, Russell waited for orders concerning the embalmment till *Tuesday*. the 7th of May ; but from a letter which will be found in a subsequent page, it appears, that the body had been embalmed before Monday ; probably on Friday evening, or Saturday morning.

^{*} On the contrary, he was fond of plain things. See his Letters to Mrs. Stewart.

respite, which was granted. Mr. Charles wrote a very handsome letter to Lord Jefferies, who returned it with this cool answer—'He knew nothing of the matter, and would be troubled no more about it. He then addressed the Lord Halifax and Bishop of Rochester, who were both too justly, though unhappily, incensed, to do any thing in it. In this extreme distress, Dr. Garth, a man who entirely loved Mr. Dryden, and was withal a man of generosity and great humanity, sends for the corpse to the College of Physicians,² in Warwick-Lane, and proposed a *funeral by subscription*, to which himself set a most noble example: Mr. Wycherley, and several others, among whom must not be forgotten Henry Cromwell, Esq. Captain Gibbons, and Mr. Christopher Metcalfe, Mr. Dryden's apothecary and intimate friend, (since a Collegiate physician,) who with many others contributed *most largely* to the subscription; and at last, a day, about *three weeks*³ after his decease, was appointed for the interment at the Abbey.

"Dr. Garth pronounced a fine Latin oration over the corpse at the College; but the audience being numerous, and the room large, it was requisite the orator should be elevated, that he might be heard: but as it unluckily happened, there was

² Unluckily for this narrative, the corpse was carried to the College on *Friday the third*, instead of *Thursday the eighth*, of May, as here stated.

³ Thirteen days only.

nothing at hand but an *old beer-barrel*,⁴ which the Doctor with much good-nature mounted ; and in the midst of his oration, beating time to the accent with his foot, the head broke in, and his feet sunk to the bottom ; which occasioned the malicious report of his enemies, that he was turned a tub-preacher. However, he finished the oration with a superiour grace and genius, to the loud acclamations of mirth, which inspired the mixed or rather mob-auditors.

“ The procession began to move ; a numerous train of coaches attended the hearse ; but, good God ! in what disorder, can only be expressed by a sixpenny pamphlet, soon after published, entitled *DRYDEN'S FUNERAL*.’ At last the corpse

⁴ In the Theatre of the College of Physicians there is a rostrum or pulpit, in which the Harveian, Cronian, and other orations are always spoken.

⁵ This is the natural progress of fiction. A man of wit, for his amusement, or to gratify his malice, sends abroad a ludicrous and distorted *poetical* account of the last solemn testimony of respect paid by some of the most distinguished characters in England, to one of its greatest poets. Thirty years afterwards, a poor authoress, to gain a few guineas, founds upon it an enlarged fictitious narrative ; and in a few years more the two accounts are received and transmitted into all the books of English biography as *true history*. This fertile lady, like some of our modern fabricators, seems to have relied on the indolence of her readers, and to have been persuaded that no one would take the trouble of detecting her clumsy inventions, by comparing them with the authentick accounts of the period referred to.

arrived at the Abbey, which was all *unlighted*. No organ played, no anthem sung; only *two* of the *singing boys* preceded the corpse, who sung an Ode of Horace, with each a small candle in their hand. The butchers and other mob broke in, like a deluge, so that only about eight or ten gentlemen could get admission; and those forced to cut the way with their drawn swords. The coffin in this disorder was let down into Chaucer's grave, with as much confusion, and as little ceremony, as was possible; every one glad to save themselves from the gentlemen's swords, or the clubs of the mob. When the funeral was over, Mr. Charles sent a challenge to Lord Jefferies, who refusing to answer it, he sent several others, and went often himself, but could neither get a letter delivered, nor admittance to speak to him; which so justly incensed him, that he resolved, since his Lordship refused to answer him like a gentleman, he would watch an opportunity to meet him, and fight off hand, though with all the rules of honour; which his Lordship hearing, left the town, and Mr. Charles could never have the satisfaction to meet him, though he sought it, till his death, with the utmost application. This is the true state of the case, and surely no reflection to the manes of this great man."⁶

⁶ The audacity of this woman in publishing this false and ridiculous account of Dryden's funeral, at a time when Southerne, and probably many others who had walked at it, were yet living, might, at the distance of

h is this lady's narrative; which she manifestly
ed on a passage in one of Farquhar's letters,'

y years, have appeared incredible, if Shakspeare,
own time, had not, with temporary success, been
the basis of a still more absurd and more auda-
fiction.

'his passage having been much relied on, as a proof
confusion and irregularity of Dryden's funeral, I
give it in the writer's own words :

come now from Mr. Dryden's funeral, where we
a Ode in Horace sung, instead of David's Psalms ;
e you may find, that we don't think a poet worth
ian burial. The pomp of the ceremony was a kind
psody, and fitter, I think, for Hudibras, than him ;
se the cavalcade was mostly burlesque : but he was
raordinary man, and buried after an extraordinary
n ; for I do believe there was never such another
seen. The oration, indeed, was great and inge-
worthy the subject, and like the author ; whose pre-
cious can restore the living, and his pen embalm the
—And so much for Mr. Dryden ; whose burial was
ame as his life, variety and not of a piece :—the
y and mob, farce and heroicks ; the sublime and
le mix'd in a piece ;—great Cleopatra in a hackney
l."

re again we find truth and just representation sacri-
to the smartness of antitheses and pointed sentences.
after all, what does this amount to ? The only cir-
stances that distinguished Dryden's funeral from any
splendid funeral, were, an Ode of Horace being
a Latin Oration being pronounced, and a band of
cians preceding the procession, and playing mourn-
music. Whatever ridicule might belong to the
it was confined to the College of Physicians : in the

and a ludicrous poem, entitled "A Description of Mr. Dryden's Funeral,"^o which was probably

other two circumstances there is surely nothing to excite laughter. From Farquhar's statement, who would not suppose that one of David's Psalms was constantly *sung* at every funeral? This, however, was only thrown in, to introduce the remark concerning Christian burial; from which the reader is led to another misrepresentation, and to suppose, contrary to the truth, that the usual burial service was not read during his interment.—As to the observation that this funeral was "*full of variety and not of a piety, quality and mob,*" &c. that remark is equally applicable to every other *great* funeral, where a number of inferior persons generally attend, partly from respect to the deceased, and partly from curiosity.—To finish the picture, we have "*great Cleopatra in a hackney coach.*" The name of Mrs. Barry, the person meant, would not have answered the writer's purpose: but she was here only in her private capacity, and not in the dress of a tragedy Queen; and, when this circumstance is attended to, the ridicule falls pointless to the ground.

The metropolis, we should recollect, was at this time very ill paved; the footways inconvenient and incommoded by sign-posts; and the streets leading to Westminster-Abbey extremely narrow: some confusion, therefore, would doubtless arise, while so large a cavalcade was passing; which was probably increased by the mob crowding in great numbers to see and join in the procession.—To the eye of a philosopher all funeral pomp appears ridiculous; but some of the most distinguished men in a nation attending, with great solemnity and proper respect, the remains of a great poet, to that noble Gothick edifice where the ashes of their Kings and Heroes are deposited, has nothing in itself ridiculous; nor can any

written by his old antagonist, Tom Brown, and published in June, 1700. Men of wit, if they can but amuse the fancy by pleasant images and a lively picturesque relation, it is well known, are seldom very solicitous about truth. The writer of this poem, however, has rarely advanced any direct falsehood; but, with a view of depreciating Dryden, has contented himself with distorting and disfiguring all the honourable circumstances attending the last tribute of respect paid by his countrymen to that great poet, in such a manner as must have completely deceived those at a distance from the metropolis, while those who had been present at the ceremony would not recognize in this ridiculous and sarcastick misrepresentation any kind of resemblance to the truth. In most great funerals, persons of various conditions and ranks of life are assembled, and form a very promiscuous train: in that of an author, who for many years had been esteemed by some of the highest

mixture of mob, or of the various classes and characters who respected the deceased, render it, what Farquhar, for the entertainment of the lady to whom this Epistle is addressed, has in vain endeavoured to represent it.

* "A Description of Mr. D——n's Funeral, a poem," was advertised (as then published) in *THE POSTMAN*, Saturday, June 22, 1700. A second edition of the same poem appeared on the 29th of June. The original edition ended with the words—*Fairy Queen*. In a third edition enlarged, which was published on the 1st of August, thirty-one new lines were added.

characters in the state, and had long been connected with the stage, and the subordinate agents of literature, the attendants would of course be still more heterogeneous; and nobles and actors, physicians and statesmen, poets and divines, actresses and criticks, musicians and booksellers, town wits and country cousins, would be found blended together. This, therefore, is the chief circumstance, of which the writer of this ludicrous description has availed himself. If you will allow him the advantage of exaggeration and caricature, and permit him only to place a duchess and a chambermaid in the same coach, he asks no more; his work is then easily performed; and if you will but laugh with him, he is sufficiently rewarded.* To elevate and sur-

* The following lines may serve as a specimen of this artifice :

- " Before the hearse the mourning hautboys go,
- " And *screech* a dismal sound of grief and woe :
- " More dismal notes from bogtrotters may fall,
- " More dismal plaints at Irish funeral ;
- " But no such floods of tears e'er stopp'd our tide,
- " Since Charles, the Martyr and the Monarch, died.—
- " The decency and order first describe,
- " Without regard to either sex or tribe.
- " The sable coaches lead the dismal van,
- " But by their side, I think, few footmen ran ;
- " Nor needed these ; the rabble fill the streets,
- " And mob with mob in great disorder meets.
- " See next the coaches, how they are accouter'd,
- " Both in the inside, eke and on the outward :

prise the reader, Mrs. Thomas thought it expedient to go much further; and to authenticate her account by the minuteness and particularity of circumstantial falsehood.

The plain and simple fact, however, on which she constructed her narrative, was this. Dryden, as has been already mentioned, expired on Wednesday morning, the first of May. Having died of a gangrene, it was necessary that he should be buried speedily; and accordingly, two days after—

"One p——y spark, one sound as any roach,

"One poet and two fidlers in a coach:

"The playhouse drab, that beats the beggar's bush,

* * * * *

"By every body kiss'd, good truth,—but such is

"Now her good fate, *to ride with Mistress Duchess.*

"Was e'er immortal poet thus buffoon'd?

"In a long line of coaches thus lampoon'd!

"A man with gout and stone quite wearied,

"Would rather live, than thus be buried."

'THE POSTBOY, on the following Tuesday, May 7, 1700, thus announces the honours then intended to be paid to the deceased poet:

"The corps of John Dryden, Esq. is to lye in state for some time, in the Colledge of Physicians; and on Monday next he is to be conveyed from thence *in a hearse*, in great splendour, to Westminster-Abbey, where he is to be interred with Chaucer, Cowley, and the rest of the renowned poets; and I am assured that a person of great quality, who has a mighty esteem for the works of that ingenious gentleman, will erect, at his own proper charge, a noble monument upon him, and so perpetuate the name of that great man."

wards, on Friday morning, (not *Saturday*, as Mrs. Thomas states,) his corpse, at the expence of Mr. Montague, afterwards Lord Halifax, was carried from his house in a very private manner, to be interred, probably in the church-yard of the neighbouring parish. The Earl of Dorset, Lord Jefferies, and some others, either hearing of his intention on that day, or meeting the procession as it moved along, and thinking so great a poet entitled to a more splendid funeral, prevailed on the relations and friends who attended his remains, to consent that the body should be carried for the purpose of embalment, to the house of Mr. Russel, a celebrated undertaker; * and the same day,

* In a letter from the Rev. Thomas Tanner, (afterwards Lord Bishop of St. Asaph,) to Dr. Arthur Charlett, Master of University College, Oxford, dated [London, Monday,] May 6, 1700, is the following paragraph :

" Mr. Dryden died a papist, if at all a Christian. Mr. Montague had given orders to bury him ; but some Lords, (my Lord Dorset, Jefferies, &c.) thinking it would not be splendid enough, ordered him to be carried to Russel's : there he was embalmed ; and now lies *in state* at the Physicians' College, and is to be buried with Chaucer, Cowley, &c. at Westminster-Abbey, on Munday next."

MSS. Ballard. in Bibl. Bodl. vol. iv. p. 29.

The foregoing paragraph I transcribed several years ago from the original in the Bodleian Library ; which I mention, because an inaccurate transcript of it some time since appeared in a periodical miscellany, in which the writer's name is mistaken.

Tanner's uncharitable doubt whether our author was at

with the assistance probably of Dr. Garth, they applied to the President and Censors of the College

all a Christian, seems to have been adopted from Milbourne, who in his Notes on the Translation of Virgil, (p. 9.) says,—“for aught I know, his very *Christianity* may be *questionable*.” To which Dryden probably alludes in his Preface to the FABLES: “May I have leave to do myself the justice, since my enemies will do me none, and are so far from granting me to be a good poet, that they will not allow me so much as to be a *Christian*, or a moral man, may I have leave, I say,” &c. See vol. iii. p. 630.

Ward's account of this transaction is as follows:

“Notwithstanding his merits had justly entitled his corpse to the most magnificent and solemn interment the beneficence of the greatest spirits could have bestowed on him, yet 'tis *credibly reported*, the ingratitude of the age is such, that they had like to have let him pass in private to his grave, without those funeral obsequies suitable to his greatness, had it not been for that true British worthy, who, meeting with the venerable remains of the neglected bard passing silently *in a coach*, unregarded, to his last home, ordered the corpse, by the consent of his few friends that attended him, to be respited from so obscure an interment; and most generously undertook, at his own expence, to revive his worth in the minds of a forgetful people, by bestowing on his peaceful dust a solemn funeral, answerable to his merit. . . . The management of the funeral was left to Mr. Russel, pursuant to the directions of that honourable great man, the Lord Jefferies, concerned *chiefly* in the pious undertaking.”—LONDON SPY, p. 419, 5th edit. 1718.

John, the second Lord Jefferies, the person here meant, was the only son of the Chancellor. He was himself a writer of verse. In the STATE POEMS, vol. iii. p. 380, we

dedication his "admirable gay humo-
city of wit," are highly commended.
issue male, in 1703.

The following most happy applica-
fable to King William the Third, in
reign, is ascribed to Lord Jefferies, in
of the STATE POEMS; but Prior, w
Secretary of State, was probably th
the verses having been found in his
his unpublished MSS., formerly in
Duchess Dowager of Portland.

" A FABLE.

" In Æsop's Tales an honest wretc
" Whose years and comforts equal
" He in two wives had two domesti
" For different age they had, and di
" One pluck'd his black hairs out,
" The man for quietness did both c
" Till all the parish saw his head qu
" And thought he wanted brains as

should be thence conveyed to Westminster-Abbey for interment; a request, which was immediately

As Mr. Montague appears to have undertaken at first to bury Dryden at his own expence, Ward's account of his remains being carried in a *coach* to interment, must be inaccurate. Tanner, who was extremely intimate with Gibson, then a Chaplain to Archbishop Tension, and was also acquainted with Jacob Tonson, and frequented his shop, was likely to obtain correct information on this subject. It is not however quite clear from his statement, whether the Lords Dorset and Jefferies met the procession in the street, or, hearing of Montague's intent, ordered the corpse to be carried from Dryden's house to that of the undertaker. From Playford's advertisement, which will be given hereafter, the former should seem to have been the case.

Pope, in the character of BUFO, in the Epistle to Arbuthnot, has particularly alluded to Montague's share in this transaction :

" Dryden alone (what wonder ?) came not nigh ;

" Dryden alone escaped his judging eye :

" But still the great have kindness in reserve ;

" He *help'd to bury* whom he help'd to starve."

To which Pope added this note : " Mr. Dryden, after having lived in exigencies, had a magnificent funeral bestowed upon him by a contribution of several persons of quality." It is wonderful, that this remark, as well as various verses in the *LUCRUS BRITANNICI*, should have long since prevented the smallest degree of credit being paid to Mrs. Thomases fictitious narrative.

The last of these four lines, which were not in the original edition of the Epistle to Arbuthnot, but added in the quarto of 1735, was perhaps suggested by the following

and unanimously granted.' At the first view it may appear a singular circumstance, that none of the admirers of Dryden should have undertaken to defray the expence necessary to be made on this

verses, subscribed with the letters P. C., " On the great Preparations made for the funeral of John Dryden, Esq."

" But wiser we, who all such precepts scorn,
 " And act without the prospect of return ;
 " *That starve the poet, and caress his urn :*
 " To a dead author wonderfully kind,
 " But rank the living with the lame and blind.
 " Like David while his infant liv'd, we weep,
 " Sackcloth put on, and solemn fasts we keep ;
 " But when the joyful news arrives, *he's dead,*
 " We feast the body, and adorn the head :
 " With songs and dances follow to the grave,
 " Whom just before we branded for a slave."

LUCTUS BRITANNICI, fol. 1700.

Pope, however, was mistaken in his assertion that Dryden did not keep up any intercourse with Mr. Montague. That he was on amicable terms with that statesman for some time before his death, and that *he did not escape his judging eye*, will appear hereafter from one of our author's letters to him, and another to his kinswoman, Mrs. Steward.

' In the Register of the College of Physicians is the following order, relative to this transaction, with which Dr. George Fordyce has obligingly furnished me :

" Comitibus Censoribus Ordinariis, Maii 3. 1700.

Present, Sir Thomas Millington, President,
 Dr. Charlton, Dr. Collins, Dr. Hulse, Censors ;
 Dr. Gill, Register.

" At the request of *several persons* of quality, that Mr. Dryden might be carried from the College of Phy-

occasion; which, including the "funeral baked meats" and other refreshments at the College of Physicians, the Abbey fees, and the undertaker's charge,⁴ could not have amounted to more than one hundred and twenty pounds: but probably it was thought more honourable to him, that this sum should be raised by the contribution of his friends, than defrayed by any single person. A subscription was accordingly made for this purpose. The body having lain in state for ten days, Monday the 13th of May was appointed for the procession to Westminster-Abbey; in the afternoon of which day, a great number of persons of quality, and others, his friends and admirers, assembled in the Hall of the College, where for some time they were soothed with mournful musick. An eloquent oration in Latin was then pronounced in the Theatre by Dr. Garth;⁵ after which the last Ode of the third book of Horace—*Esegi monumentum ære*

sicians to be interred at Westminster, it was unanimously granted by the President and Censors."

According to tradition, Garth was the person who communicated this request to the President and Censors.

⁴ Russel's bill, which will be found in a subsequent page, amounted only to £.45. 17. 0.

⁵ Garth's intended eulogy was thus announced in THE POSTBOY, Thursday, May 9, 1700:

"We hear that Dr. Garth, that learned physician and famous orator, is to make Mr. Dryden's funeral oration in Latin."

In an anonymous poem of some merit, addressed to Dr. Garth, in LUCTUS BRITANNICI, (almost the only one

perennius, &c. was sung. The procession then set forward to Westminster-Abbey, consisting of a hearse drawn by six horses, honourably attended by many noblemen and gentlemen in near fifty

in the collection entitled even to this slender praise,) his oration is thus alluded to :

- " And since Britannia's noblest sons have paid
- " Their sorrows to this venerable shade,
- " And with solemnity of grief have shewn,
- " They durst ev'n abdicated merit own ;
- " Though murmur'ing fiends, to malice ever just,
- " Revil'd the triumphs of his honour'd dust,
- " As through the streets the moving spoils of fate
- " Mix'd pomp with sorrow, and despair with state :—
- " Since the dead bard his living honours owes,
- " Next to his verse, to *your immortal prose*,
- " And in wit's throne by wit's assistance reigns,
- " And shines a Virgil in a Tully's strains ;—
- " Since generous Montague a *tomb designs*
- " For him he stabb'd, when living, with his lines ;
- " And, unconfined in bounteous actions, shews,
- " How he can keep his friends, and gain his foes ;—
- " As he, by coming ages to be read,
- " Preserves the living, and protects the dead ;
- " Isis and Cham and Thame would be ingrate,
- " If unconcern'd at such a moving fate,
- " Which gives employment to the noblest tears,
- " And speaks a general loss in general fears."

So also, in the following Latin verses by Henry Vernon, *ibidem* :

- " Sed quod in æternos jam vivis mortuus annos,
- " Insequiturque tuos assequa fama rogos,

coaches,⁶ and preceded by a band of musick;
and the remains of Dryden were interred in the

" Hoc tibi non totum debes, dum *Garthus* amicum

" Et Montacutus junxerit almus opem :

" Nec tibi defuncto sic grates solveret ætas,

" Ni daret hic *laudes*, hic *monumenta* daret."

I do not recollect that Garth is any where mentioned by Dryden ; but of the intimacy which had subsisted between them, the following lines are a proof. They were addressed " to Sir Samuel Garth on his recovering her mother," by Mrs. Thomas, of whom I have had occasion to say so much ; whose testimony, where she had no motive to deceive, may be admitted :

" Let others Phœbus' aid require,

" To sing their hero's fame ;

" No sacred power will I invoke,

" But Dryden's awful name.

" The wond'rous man great Dryden knew,

" Admir'd his worth, and lov'd him too ;

" And in sweet notes would still commend

" The *Æsculapius* and the friend.

" O venerable shade, my wishes hear,

" And help me sing the man, whom you esteem'd so dear."

The author of the burlesque account of Dryden's Funeral thus attempts to ridicule Garth's kind offices on this occasion :

" But stay, my Muse,—the learned Garth appears ;

" He sighing comes, and is half drown'd in tears :

" The famous Garth, whom learned poets call

" Knight of the Order of the Urinal.

" He of Apollo learn'd his wond'rous skill ;

" He taught him how to sing, and how to kill ;

grave of Chaucer^t with all due solemnity, one of the prebendaries reading the funeral service, and

- " For all he sends unto the darksome grave,
- " He honours also with an epitaph.
- " He entertain'd the audience with oration,
- " Though very new, yet something out of fashion :
- " But 'cause the hearers were with learning blest,
- " He said it in the language of the beast ;
- " But so pronounc'd, the sound and sense agrees,—
- " A country mouse talks better in a cheese ;
- " Or Jack-at-a-pinch, when, reeling, he repairs
- " To neighb'ring church, to mumble o'er his pray'rs.
- " The sense and wit, they say, was very good,
- " Though neither seen, felt, heard, nor understood :
- " Thus we must all, as common rumour saith,
- " Believe the doctor by implicit faith."

Farquhar, however, informs us, that his " oration was great and ingenious, worthy the subject, and like the author."—From the seventh and eighth of these verses it should seem, that Garth had attended our author in his last illness, probably in conjunction with Dryden's friend, Dr. Gibbons.

Oldys, in his manuscript notes on Langbaine, mentions, that he had a manuscript copy of Garth's funeral oration, and *epitaph*, on Dryden. He also says, he had in his possession a letter written by Dryden to his father, (Dr. William Oldys, Chancellor of Lincoln, &c.) thanking him for some communications relative to Plutarch, one of whose Lives was translated by Dr. Oldys : but where these papers now are, I know not. Oldys, the antiquary, died very poor, April 15, 1761 ; and his books and manuscripts fell into various hands.

In a Miscellany, entitled THE POETICAL ENTERTAINER, No. V. 8vo. 1712, is the following Latin Epi-

the Choir attending.⁶ All the circumstances therefore, of Bishop Sprat's first proposition, the day

taph, (subscribed with the initial letters H. C.,) which is there said, "*though old*," not to have been printed before :

" Epitaphium JO. DRYDENI, Q. P. L. [Quondam
Poetæ Laureati.]

" Musarum cineres ac magni nominis umbras

" Quisquis amans post fata colis, ne lumine sicco

" Prætereas hospes, monet hoc te carmine Phœbus.

" Drydeni tenuem conjectum corpus in urnam

" Demissis lugens velat Victoria pennis,

" Nulli unquam tam fida comes : PANTHERA, SALON-
QUE

" Testis, et altisonis urbs heu ! viduata cothurnis,

" Fortunæque fides potior. Ne quære coronam ;—

" E tumulo palmæ plantataque laurea crescunt."

⁶ In this procession doubtless were found, the Earl of Dorset, the Marquis of Normanby, Lord Jefferies, the Earl of Rochester, Mr. George Granville, Mr. Montague, Mr. St. John, Sir Charles Sidley, Sir William Bowyer, Mr. Dolben, Sir William Trumbull, Mr. Moyle, Mr. Pepys, Sir Godfrey Kneller, Betterton, Garth, Congreve, Wycherley, Southerne, Vanbrugh, Creech, Farquhar, and Walsh. I doubt whether Steele, Rowe, or Prior, attended, though they were then, I believe, in or near London, Prior, in a letter written from Hampton-Court, the day after Dryden's death, takes no notice of that event.

⁷ This circumstance is particularly alluded to in the following verses, by the anonymous author of the poem addressed to Dr. Garth, *LUCTUS BRITANNICI*, p. 55 :

" His latest work, though in his last decays,

" As far exceeds his former, as our praise ;

...in his tomb, who bre

See also the Latin Verses in
same Collection—" *In celeberrimo
Chauceri sepulchro intectum.*"

The following account of his death
in the newspaper called THE GAZETTE
14, 1700:

"Yesterday the corps of John
deceased departed this life the 1st instant
state to Westminster-Abbey from
sicians, whither it was removed &
attended by above one hundred of
the nobility and gentry, who shew
what respect they had for that excellent
he was removed from the college
eloquent oration in Latin, in praise
the Ode of Horace, beginning—
perennius, set to mournful musick,
a consort of trumpets, hautboys, &
There was a world of people; and the
of Gloucester was pleased to send
attend the funeral, which was

into his widow's bedchamber;—of Dr. Garth falling into a rotten beer-barrel;—of the non-

Chaucer, Cowley, &c. Before he was brought from the College, an Ode was sung, with a fine consort of musick, and an excellent oration made in Latin by the ingenious orator, Dr. Garth; there being abundance of the nobility and gentry present. The corps was preceded by several mourners on horseback: before the hearse went the musick on foot, who made a very harmonious noise. The hearse was followed by twenty coaches drawn by six horses, and twenty-four drawn by two horses each, most of them in mourning."

The FLYING POST, OR THE POSTMASTER, of the same day, is more concise:

"Yesterday the corps of Mr. Dryden, the Poet, was honourably attended from the College of Physicians to the place of interment in Westminster-Abby, near the two famous poets, Cowley and Chaucer. One of the Prince's coaches, and a great many of those of the nobility, in mourning, honoured the funeral."

For the last two extracts, as well as for some other curious notices from the same newspapers, I am indebted to the very learned Dr. Charles Burney, Jun. of Greenwich.

Edward Ward's quaint account contains some particulars, not noticed in the papers of the day:

"The first honours done to his deserving relicks was lodging them in Physicians' College, from whence they were appointed to take their last remove. The constituted day appointed for the celebration of that office which living heroes perform in respect to a dead worthy, was Monday the 19th day of May, in the afternoon: at which time, according to the notice given, [*formerly, printed notices of funerals were sent to such persons as were invited to attend,*]

attendance of the Choir, and want of an organ ;— of the two singing-boys chanting an ode of Horace, in the Abbey, each of them *holding a small*

most of the nobility and gentry, now in town, assembled themselves together at the noble edifice aforesaid, in order to honour the corpse with their personal attendance. When the company were met, a performance of grave musick, adapted to the solemn occasion, was communicated to the ears of the company by the hands of the best masters in England ; whose artful touches on their soft instruments diffused such harmonious influence amongst the attentive auditory, that the most heroick spirits in the whole assembly were unable to resist the passionate force of each dissolving strain, but melted into tears.

When this part of the solemnity was ended, the famous Dr. Garth ascended the pulpit, where the physicians make their lectures, and delivered, according to the Roman custom, a funeral oration, in Latin, on his deceased friend, which he performed with great approbation and applause of all such gentlemen that heard him, and were true judges of the matter ; most rhetorically setting forth those elogies and encomiums which no poet hitherto but the great Dryden could truly deserve. When these rites were over in the College, the corpse, by bearers for that purpose, was handled into the hearse, being adorned with plumes of black feathers, with the sides hung round with the escutcheons of his ancestors, mixed with those of his lady ; the hearse drawn by six stately Flanders horses ; every thing being set off with the most useful ornaments to move regard, and affect the memories of the numberless spectators, as a means to encourage every spritely genius to attempt something in their lives, that may once render their dust worthy of so publick a veneration. All things being put in due order for their movement, they began

candle in his hand ;—of the mob breaking in, so as to prevent any more than eight or ten gentlemen gaining admittance, *who cut their way with drawn swords* ;—and finally, of Mr Charles Dryden challenging Lord Jefferies, and never being able to meet with him,—all these circumstances, with

their solemn procession towards Westminster Abbey, after the following manner :

" The two beadles of the College marched first, in mourning cloaks and hatbands, with the heads of their staves wrapped in black crape scarves ; being followed by several other servile mourners, whose business it was to prepare the way, that the hearse might pass less liable to interruption. Next to these moved a consort of hautboys and trumpets, playing and sounding together a melancholy funeral march, undoubtedly composed upon that particular occasion : after these, the Undertaker, with his hat off ; - - - then came the hearse, as before described, most honourably attended with abundance of quality in their coaches and six horses ; that it may be justly reported to posterity, that no Ambassador from the greatest Emperor in all the universe, sent over with a welcome embassy to the throne of England, ever made his publick entry to the Court with half that honour as the corpse of the great Dryden did its last exit to the grave. In this order the nobility and gentry attended the hearse to Westminster-Abbey, where the Choir, assisted by the best masters in England, sung an *epicedium* ; and the last funeral rites being performed by one of the Prebends, he was honourably interred between Chaucer and Cowley : where, according to report, will be erected a very stately monument, in order to recommend his worth, and to preserve his memory to all succeeding ages." LONDON SPY, p. 420—422.

many others of inferior note, were merely the "nimble shapes" and lively effusions of Corinna's forgetive imagination.

Very soon after Dryden's death, Henry Playford, who had long been known as a publisher of music, solicited the followers of the Muses to express their sorrow for the loss of that great poet ;* in consequence of which he was enabled, in less than two months, to publish a Collection of English and Latin verses, under the title of "LUCTUS BRITANNICI, or the Tears of the British Muses for the Death of John Dryden," &c. ;† and this was preceded or followed by several separate Ele-

* In THE POSTBOY, for Tuesday, May 7, 1700, Playford inserted the following advertisement :

"The death of the famous John Dryden, Esq., Poet Laureate to their two late Majesties, King Charles and King James the Second, being a subject capable of employing the best pens ; and *several persons of quality, and others, having put a stop to his interment*, which is designed to be in Chaucer's grave, in Westminster-Abbey ; this is to desire the gentlemen of the two famous Universities, and others, who have a respect for the memory of the deceased, and are inclinable to such performances, to send what copies they please, as Epigrams, &c. to Henry Playford, at his shop at the Temple 'Change in Fleet-street, and they shall be inserted in a Collection, which is designed after the same nature, and in the same method, (in what language they shall please,) as is usual in the composures which are printed on solemn occasions, at the two Universities aforesaid."

This advertisement (with some alterations) was continued for a month in the same paper.

gies,¹ and another collection of plaintive verses, entitled "THE NINE MUSES, or Poems written by nine several Ladies, upon the death of the late famous John Dryden, Esq."¹—From some lines in the first of these collections, we learn, that there was

¹ In THE POSTBOY of June 20th, 1700, this Collection was thus advertised :

"Yesterday was published, LUCTUS BRITANNICI, or the Tears of the British Muses for the death of John Dryden, Esq., late Poet Laureate, &c. Written by the most eminent hands in the two Universities, and by several others ; with his Effigies. Printed," &c.

It consists of fifty-five folio pages of English, and twenty-four pages of Latin, verse.

¹ In THE POSTBOY for Thursday, May 2, 1700, the day after our author died, we find—

"This morning was published, an Elegy on John Dryden, Esq.; *the true and right sort*. Printed for John Nutt, near Stationers' Hall."

This Elegy I have never seen. It was probably written by Tom Brown ; for Nutt was his publisher.

In THE FLYING POST for June 18, 1700, was advertised—"To the Memory of Mr. Dryden, a poem ; printed for Charles Brome, at the Gun, at the West end of St. Paul's church-yard. Price 6d."

In THE FLYING POST, Tuesday, June 25, 1700, was advertised as then published—"An Ode by way of Elegy, on the universally lamented death of the incomparable Mr. Dryden. By Alexander Oldys. Printed for John Nutt, &c. Price 6d." This I have never seen.

Mrs. Thomas, in her volume of Poems, has one addressed to Captain Gibbons (probably a son of our author's Physician,) "on his Poem to the memory of Mr. Dryden ;" but I have never seen it, unless that published by C. Brome be his ; which is a very mean performance.

show where his ashes were

These ladies were, Mrs. Manly
elegies; the Hon. the Lady P[er]
F[ield] (who has also a poem in I
Mrs. I. E.; Mrs. M[ary] P[ix]; I
ter]; Mrs. L. D.; Mrs. D. E.

In this Collection, of which I ha
except that in Mr. Bindley's curious
copy that was presented to Mr. Mo
single line worth quoting, nor one
ing Dryden, worth recording.

Richard Basset, the publisher, i
dresses with which Mr. Montague v
fed, (for the Collection is dedicated
his subscription *towards* Dryden's
extraordinary munificence! "I th
(says he,) to make a present of what i
of the most *consummate poet* among
to the most DISTINGUISHING among
have been pleased already to show

same year, (1717,) Thomas Pelham, Duke of Newcastle, who a few years before had succeeded to a very great estate, allowed Congreve to address him in the highest strain of panegyrick, for "the most noble, the most magnificent, and the most uncommon act of generosity ever recorded in history; that of having, from pure regard to merit, from an entire love of learning, and from that accurate taste and discernment which he had so early obtained in the polite arts,—*given order* for erecting, at his own expence, a splendid monument to the memory of a man whom he never saw, but who was an honour to his country."* His Grace appears to have thought the *order* which he is said to have given, fully sufficient; for no one step further does he appear to have taken, to complete this *noble and unprecedented act of munificence*, nor a single stone did he ever inscribe with the name of Dryden. At length John Sheffield, formerly Earl of Mulgrave and Marquis of Normanby, and now become Duke of Buckinghamshire, roused by some lines which were intended to be inscribed on Rowe's tomb,⁶ rescued his

* Dedication of Dryden's Plays, six vols. 12mo. 1717.

⁶ Rowe having died in December, 1718, was buried in Westminster-Abbey; and a monument was erected to his memory by his widow, at whose desire Pope wrote the following inscription for it:

"Thy reliques, Rowe, to this fair urn we trust,

"And sacred place by Dryden's awful dust:

"Beneath a rude and nameless stone he lies,

"To which thy tomb shall guide inquiring eyes:

country from the disgrace incurred by the long neglect of so great a poet, and defrayed the charge

"Peace to thy gentle shade, and endless rest!

"Blest in thy genius, in thy love too, blest!

"One grateful woman to thy fame supplies,

"What a whole thankless land to his denies."

The maiden name of Rowe's *sorrowful* relict was Devenish. She married, not long afterwards, Colonel Deane; and, as Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes, some years ago informed me, was the widow supposed to be alluded to by Pope in the fourth and fifth of the following lines; Dialogue II. 1738:

"Find you the virtue, and I'll find the verse:—

"But random praise—the task can ne'er be done;

"Each mother asks it for her booby son;

"Each widow asks it for the best of men,

"For him she weeps, and him she weds again."

The *mother* was Catharine, Duchess of Buckinghamshire.

The foregoing inscription intended for Rowe, belonging, as Dr. Johnson long ago observed, rather to Dryden than Rowe, was changed afterwards to that now on his tomb. The second couplet, however, roused Sheffield, Duke of Buckinghamshire, who defrayed the expence of the plain monument afterwards erected, (*on this hint, as Pope tells us,*) to our poet's memory. It was probably designed by Kent, and the *present* bust was executed by Scheemaker. From the following entry in the Chapter-book of the collegiate church of St. Peter, Westminster, it appears that a bust of inferior workmanship kept its place on our author's tomb for above ten years, previous to Scheemaker being employed:

"At a CHAPTER held the 20th day of Nov. 1731.

"Ordered, that her Grace the Dutchess of Buckinghamshire have leave to change the present bust of Mr. Dryden, for a better."

of a very plain and unexpensive monument to his memory in Westminster-Abbey, which that nobleman did not live to see completed.

The original monument probably did not cost more than £.100. Scheemaker, as his scholar, Mr. Nollekens, informs me, probably received for his bust, twenty-five guineas.—From the total silence of the Treasurer's books, which have been carefully examined with this view, it may be collected, that no fees were received by the Dean and Chapter of Westminster, on Dryden's interment, nor any fine required on erecting his monument in the Abbey.

The epitaph at first intended by Pope for this monument,

" This Sheffield rais'd; the sacred dust below

" Was Dryden once :—the rest who does not know ?"

seems to have been suggested by a passage in a letter from Atterbury to him, without date, but apparently written at Bromley, in the latter end of September, 1720 :

" What I said to you in mine, about the monument, was intended only to quicken, not to alarm you. It is not worth your while to know what I meant by it; but when I see you, you shall. I hope you may be at the Deanery, towards the end of October, by which time I think of settling there for the winter. What do you think of some such short inscription as this in Latin, which may, in a few words, say all that is to be said of Dryden, and yet nothing more than he deserves ?

" JOHANNI DRYDENO,

CUI POESIS ANGLICANA

VIM SUAM AC VENERES DEBET;

ET SI QUA IN POSTERUM AUGEBITUR LAUDE,

EST ADHUC DEBITURA.

HONORIS ERGO P. ETC.

" To shew you that I am as much in earnest in the affair as you yourself, something I will send you of this kind,

It is much to the honour of Dr. John Shadwell, the son of Dryden's celebrated antagonist, that, in a private letter written from Paris, about three months

in English. If your design holds of fixing Dryden's name only below, and his busto above, may not lines like these be graved just under the name?

" *This Sheffield rais'd, to Dryden's ashes just ;*

" Here fix'd his name, and there his laurel'd bust :

" What else the Muse in marble might express,

" Is known already : praise would make him less.

" Or thus :

" More needs not ; when acknowledg'd merits reign,

" Praise is impertinent, and censure vain."

The thought is nearly the same as in the following lines in LUCTUS BRITANNICI, by William Marston, of Trinity College, Cambridge :

" *In JOANNEM DRYDEN, poetarum facile principem.*

Si quis in has ædes intret fortasse viator,

Busta poetarum dum veneranda notet,

Cernat et exuvias Drydeni,—plura referre

Haud opus : ad laudes vox ea sola satis."

From Atterbury's letter it appears, that this epitaph was left by the Duke of Buckingham, (who died in the following February) entirely to Pope. None of the proposed inscriptions, however, were adopted ; but, instead of them, the following words :

" J. D R Y D E N.

Natus 1632. Mortuus 1 Maii. 1700.

Joannes Sheffield, Dux Buckinghamiensis posuit.

1720."

If Dryden was born on the 9th of August, 1631, (as Pope himself tells us he was, in his inaccurate account of this very inscription, fifteen years afterwards,) when he died, he wanted three months of being sixty-nine years old

after our poet's funeral, he thus expressed himself concerning him :

In the Preface to the *FABLES*, which was probably written in Dec. 1699, or the following month, he speaks of himself as *sixty-eight* : but he doubtless referred to his last birthday. He was in his sixty-ninth year. So also the author of an anonymous Poem to his memory, published in folio, June 18, 1700 (speaking of his last great production, *THE FABLES*) :

- " His inexhausted force knew no decay ;
- " In spite of years, his Muse grew young and gay ;
- " And vig'rous, like the patriarch of old,
- " His last-born, Joseph, cast in finest mould :
- " This son of *sixty-nine*, surpassing fair,
- " With any elder offspring may compare."

The author of the article, *Építaphe*, in the French *ENCYCLOPÉDIE*, speaking of our poet's monument, says, " Les Anglois n'ont mis sur le tombeau de Dryden, que ce mot pour tout éloge :

DRYDEN :

et les Italiens sur le tombeau due Tasse,

Les Os du TASSE.

" I'l n'y a guere que les hommes de génie, qu'il soit sure de louer ainsi."

This account of Tasso's epitaph is not quite accurate ; for his friend Giovanni Battista Manso informs us in his life of Tasso, (Ven. 12mo. 1621, p. 234,) that coming to Rome ten years after his death (1605) and finding that no tomb had been placed over him, and that Cardinal Cinthio would not permit him to erect one, (intending to do that office himself,) he caused the following words to be inscribed on the plain stone, in the church of S. Onofrio, with which the poet's remains were covered :

" HIC JACET TORQUATUS TASSUS."

According to a modern traveller, (Keyser,) the Fraternity

" . . . The men of letters here lament the loss of Mr. Dryden very much. The honours paid

of St. Onofrio had in 1601 caused a similar inscription to be engraved on the stone beneath which Tasso was interred ; but probably he is mistaken in the date.

The writer of the article above referred to appears to have confounded the great Italian poet and his father, whose tomb at *Mantua* has this inscription :

" OSSA BERNARDI TASSI."

In another foreign work, which in general is not so incorrect and unsatisfactory as that just quoted almost always is, NOUVEAU DICTIONNAIRE HISTORIQUE, edit. 1789, we are told, that our author produced several tragedies, which, though sprinkled with beauties, are little better than *sublime farces* ; and that Atterbury translated two of these sublime farces into Latin verse, the one entitled *ACHITOPHEL*, and the other *ABSALON* !—

" Those epitaphs are the most perfect, (says Dr. Johnson, in an Essay printed first in the year 1740,) which set virtue in the strongest light, and are best adapted to exalt the reader's ideas, and rouse his emulation. To this end, it is not always necessary to recount the actions of a hero, or enumerate the writings of a philosopher. To imagine such information necessary, is to detract from their characters, or to suppose their works mortal, or their achievements in danger of being forgotten. *The bare name* of such men answers every purpose of a long inscription.

" Had only the name of Sir Isaac Newton been subjoined to the design upon his monument, instead of a long detail of his discoveries, which no philosopher can want, and which none but a philosopher can understand, those by whose direction it was raised, had done more honour both to him and to themselves.

to him have done our countrymen no small service; for next to having so considerable a man of our own growth, 'tis a reputation to have known how to value him, as patrons very often pass for wits, by esteeming those that are so."¹ - - We have here a striking contrast to the acrimonious depreciation of Dryden, which the almost forgotten

" This indeed is a commendation, which it requires no genius to bestow, but which can never become vulgar or contemptible, if bestowed with judgment; because no single age produces many men superior to panegyrick. None but the first names can stand unassisted against the attacks of time; and if men raised to reputation by accident or caprice have nothing but their names engraved on their tombs, there is danger lest in a few years the inscription require an interpreter. Thus have their expectations been disappointed, who honoured Picus of Mirandola with this pompous epitaph:

" Hic situs est PICUS MIRANDOLA; cætera norunt

" Et Tagus et Ganges, forsân et Antipodes.

" His name, then celebrated in the remotest corners of the earth, is now almost forgotten; and his works, then studied, admired, and applauded, are now mouldering in obscurity."

¹ Dr. John Shadwell, son of the Laureate, was Physician to Queen Anne, George I. and George II.; by the former of whom he was knighted. In August, 1699, he attended the Earl of Manchester, who then went to Paris as Ambassador Extraordinary to Louis XIV.; and he continued there with that nobleman, till his return to England in September, 1701. He died Dec. 4, 1747.

² Letter to Dr. Arthur Charlett, dated Aug. 4, N. S. 1700. MSS. Ballard. in Bibl. Bodl. vol. xxiv. p. 93.

works of Antony, the third Earl of Shaftesbury, in various places exhibit ;" who never seems to have forgotten or forgiven Dryden's contemptuous mention of his father,' and his masterly portrait of the first Earl.

Among the French men of letters, however, who lamented Dryden, we must not enumerate Boileau, though he was the most distinguished writer of that time, and had been highly commended by our author on many occasions ; for though he said, he was extremely pleased to find by the publick papers, that such extraordinary honours had been paid to a poet in England, by a publick and splendid funeral, he at the same

CHARACTERISTICKS, vol. i. p. 156. vol. iii. p. 189, n. Edinb. 12mo. 1758.

- " Great wits are sure to madness near allied,
- " And thin partitions do their bounds divide :
- " Else, why should he, with wealth and honour blest,
- " Deprive his age the needful hours of rest ;
- " Punish a body which he could not please,
- " Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease ?
- " And all, to leave what with his toil he won,
- " To that unfeather'd two-legg'd thing, a son ;
- " Got while his soul did huddled notions try,
- " And born a shapeless lump, like anarchy."

This *unfeather'd two-legg'd thing* (which, however, is only Aristotle's definition of man,) was married several years before these lines were written ; for his son, Antony, the author of the *CHARACTERISTICKS*, was born at Exeter-House, in the Strand, in which his grandfather then resided, Feb. 26, 1670-71. Antony, the second lord, died in 1699.

time, with an affectation unworthy of so great a writer, asked, who this poet was, and pretended never before to have heard of his name.³ His countrymen, however, at this very time were purchasing the engraved portrait of that obscure and unknown versifier with great avidity.⁵

From various passages in our author's works it may be collected, that his union with Lady Elizabeth Howard was far from contributing to his domestick happiness. His invectives against the married state are frequent and bitter, and were continued to the latest period of his life.⁴ Her wayward and unhappy disposition, which was the

³ Life and Posthumous Works of Arthur Maynwaring, Esq. 8vo. 1715. p. 17.

⁵ Poem to the memory of Mr. Dryden, printed for C. Brome, fol. 1700.

⁴ See the opening of *ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL*. In his Dedication of *ELEONORA*, (1692,) he says, "the exteriours of mourning, a decent funeral, and black habits, are the usual stint of common husbands; and perhaps their wives deserve no better than to be mourned with hypocrisy and forgot with ease." About two years afterwards in a letter to Dennis, he says, "Mr. Wycherley is full as competent an arbitrator [to decide on the propriety of a common friend's intended marriage]; he has been a bachelor and married man, and is now a widower: . . . yet I suppose *he will not give any large commendations to his middle state.*" But his most bitter invective against the connubial state is contained in the following lines, addressed to his kinsman, not long before his own death:

"Minds are so hardly match'd, that even the first,

"Though pair'd by heaven, in paradise were curs'd;

occasion of much disquiet to her husband, perhaps may be in some degree attributed to that distemper of mind, which at length ended in the total derangement of her understanding. In consequence of her conduct both before and after her marriage, she was so little respected by his relations, that many of them lived in no kind of inti-

- " For man and woman, though in one they grew,
- " Yet, first or last, return again to two :
- " He to GOD's image, she to his was made,
- " So farther from the fount, the stream at random stray'd.
- " How could he stand, when, put to double pain,
- " He must a weaker than himself sustain ?
- " Each might have stood perhaps ; but each alone ;
- " Two wrestlers help to pull each other down.
- " Not that my verse would blemish all the fair ;
- " But yet if some be bad, 'tis wisdom to beware ;
- " And better shun the bait, than struggle in the snare. }
- " Thus have you shunn'd, and shun, the married state,
- " Trusting as little as you can to fate."

Such is our author's representation of that condition of life, in which his kinsman happened to be placed ; the colouring of which, as well as of the other passages referred to, may in some degree have taken a tint from his own domestick unhappiness. But one who had surveyed life with a still more penetrating eye than Dryden, speaking of that state on which he is so lavish of encomiums, has observed, that " in general, even ill-assorted marriages are preferable to cheerless celibacy."—" To live, (adds the same writer, in another place,) without feeling or exciting sympathy, to be fortunate without adding to the felicity of others, or afflicted without tasting the balm of pity, is a state more gloomy than solitude : it is not retreat, but exclusion, from mankind. Marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleasures."

macy with her, confining their intercourse to mere visits of ceremony ;⁵ nor does she appear to have ever accompanied our author in his excursions to Northamptonshire and other counties. In the latter part of his life he frequently visited his friends and relations near Oundle, and his kinsman at Chester-ton in Huntingdonshire ; but Lady Elizabeth, for so she was always called, remained in London.

Of her person no authentick account has been transmitted to us, nor has any portrait of her been hitherto discovered ; but, if we may believe a lampoon of the last age,⁶ her ill conditions were in no degree compensated by any personal attraction.

Soon after Dryden's death, she became insane,⁷

⁵ Communicated by Lady Dryden, from the information of her aunt-in-law, the late Lady Dryden, who died at Canons-Ashby, May 7, 1791, aged above eighty ; and from the widow of her grandfather, Edward Dryden, Esq., which lady died in London in 1761, aged eighty-four, and had been personally acquainted with our author and his wife.

⁶ THE TORY POETS, 4to. 1682.

The following Epitaph, *intended* for his wife, is ascribed to Dryden, in MS. Harl. 7316, p. 189 :

" Here lies my wife ; here let her lie :

" She 's now at rest,—and so am I."

Though there is no evidence that these lines were written by him, they yet shew that the received opinion of the last age was, that little harmony subsisted between them. Whoever was the writer, the thought is not original, being evidently suggested by a well-known old French epitaph :

" C'y gist ma femme : O, qu'elle est bien .

" Pour son repos,—et pour le mien !"

and was confined under the care of a female attendant,⁷ to whom her dower out of his paternal estate at Blakesley was regularly paid for her use : a very scanty provision, to which perhaps some

⁷ According to Mrs. Thomas, who is entitled to little credit, she became insane about the year 1703. To ascertain this fact, the Lord Chancellor, at my request, was pleased to order the proper officer to examine whether any commission of lunacy was issued against her ; but none was found. The following authentick extract, however, proves that she was a lunatick, though it does not fix the time when her mind became deranged. In 1713 a sum of money becoming due by Tonson to Dryden's estate, on his printing a second edition of *THE FABLES*, and all Dryden's sons being then dead, Anne, Lady Sylvius, (the youngest daughter of Lady Elizabeth Dryden's brother, the Honourable William Howard, and widow of Sir Gabriel Sylvius, Knt. who was Privy Purse to James II., and Envoy Extraordinary to the Court of Denmark at the time of the Revolution,) doubtless for the purpose of receiving this money for the benefit of her aunt, obtained letters of administration to the effects of the poet, unadministered by his son Charles ; of which the following minute is preserved in the Prerogative-Office :

“ Vicesimo octavo die Maii, 1713, emanavit commissio dominæ Annæ Sylvius, viduæ, nepti ex fratre, et proximæ consanguinæ prænobilis et honorandæ fæminæ dominæ Elizabethæ Dryden, viduæ relictæ Johannis Dryden, nuper parochiæ S^æ Annæ Westmⁱ in com. Mid. arm. defuncti, habentis, &c. ad administranda bona jura et credita dicti defuncti, (per Carolum Dryden, filium dicti defuncti, modo etiam demortuum, inadministrata,) in usum et beneficium, et durante *lunacia*, dictæ prænobilis et honorandæ fæminæ dominæ Elizabethæ Dryden, relictæ dicti Johannis Dryden defuncti, de bene, &c. jurat.”

addition was made, from his property in Wiltshire. In this lamentable condition she continued for several years; for she did not die till June or July, 1714,^a probably in the seventy-ninth year of her

^a After the estate of Canons-Ashby was devised by Sir Robert Dryden, in 1708, to his kinsman, Edward Dryden, Esq., eldest son of Erasmus, our author's brother, Erasmus appears to have resided at Canons-Ashby, and to have received his son's rents. He appears to have also received the rents of the small estate in that neighbourhood which had belonged to our author, and to have transmitted his widow's dower for her use. The following entries in his books of account, which nearly ascertain the time of her death, were obligingly communicated by Lady Dryden :

" March 26, 1713. Payd to my son, Mr. Edw. Dryden, the summe of tenn pounds, upon accompt of my Laday Dryden's rents, being for half a year, from Michaelmas, 1712, to Laday [day] 1713—ten pounds."

" To my son Dryden for Mrs. Stoker, for the use of my Laday Dryden, which will be due 29th present September, St. Michael the Archangel, [1713] ten pounds. £.10. 0. 0."

" March 25, 1714. Paid to my son Dryden, to Mrs. Stoker, for my Lady Dryden, ten pounds, in full to this day. £.10. 0. 0."

" August 28th, 1714. Payd to my son Dryden five pounds, rests, due to my Lad. Eli. Dryden accompt, to Mrs. Stoker, in full of all demands to Midsummer, being "deceased."

Mrs. Stoker, or Stoker, was probably the nurse, or keeper, under whose care Lady Elizabeth Dryden was placed.

age.* I have not been able to discover where she was buried.

* Though in p. 290, to give full force to the notion there controverted, I have allowed that Lady Elizabeth Dryden might have been only fifty-three in 1698, the truth, I believe, is, that she was born in 1635, or not long afterwards, and consequently was then *sixty-three*. If Collins were correct in his account of her family in the *PEERAGE*, she must have been still older; for she is stated by him to have been the eldest of the four daughters of Thomas Howard, Earl of Berkshire; and her sister, Frances, was born in 1629: but Elizabeth was in fact the youngest daughter, as appears from the Visitation of Lincolnshire made in 1634, and now in the College of Heralds, marked C. 23. Her maternal grandfather, William, Earl of Exeter, subscribes the pedigree there entered; in which not only his children, but his grandchildren, are enumerated. We there find eight sons of the Earl of Berkshire; Charles (then seventeen years old,) Thomas, Henry, William, Edward, ("the incomparable author of *THE BRITISH PRINCES*," who was born in 1624,) Robert, Philip, and Algernon; and three daughters, Frances, Mary, and Diana; but not Elizabeth. It is extremely probable that she was born in the following year, or soon afterwards; for her eldest brother being born in 1617, her parents at this time must have been eighteen years married; and the children above enumerated were born in a regular succession between 1617 and 1633.

Her family in general were long-lived; for her father died in 1669, at ninety years of age; and her mother in 1671, when she probably was seventy-five. Her brother, Sir Robert Howard, whose age none of the writers of English biography have ascertained, was baptized Jan. 19,

By this lady, whom Dryden married in 1665; or before, he had three sons; Charles, John, and Erasmus-Henry; all of them, says a good judge,⁹ who knew them personally, "fine, ingenious, and accomplished gentlemen." Charles, the eldest, was born at Charlton, in the county of Wilts, the seat of his grandfather, Thomas, Earl of Berkshire, in 1666, and bred at Westminster School, where he was chosen a King's scholar in 1680; whence he was elected to Trinity College, in Cambridge, of which he was admitted a member in June, 1683.¹ In the next year, he wrote a paper of Latin Verses, addressed to Wentworth Dillon, Earl of Roscommon,² which were prefixed to that nobleman's *ESSAY ON TRANSLATED VERSE*; and in 1685 contributed a Latin Poem to the Cambridge Collection of Verses published on the death of Charles the Second, and

1625-6, and was above seventy-two when he died, Sept. 3, 1698: her brother Thomas, who in 1679 became the third Earl, died in 1706, at the age of eighty-seven: and Philip, who had been a Colonel in the Guards in the time of Charles the Second, when he died in 1717, was eighty-eight years old.

⁹ Mrs. Elizabeth Creed. See the APPENDIX, No. IV.

¹ "Carolus Dryden, natus Charlton. agro Wilton. fil. Johannis Dryden, Poetæ Laureati, quondam hujus collegii alumni, Westmonasteriensis, electus, ætatis 17, Jun. 26, 1683; Pensionarius. Mr. Smallwood, Tutor." Registr. Coll. Trin.

² A translation of these verses, by Mr. Needler, is preserved in Nichols's Select Collection of Poems, vol. vi. p. 52.

the accession of James.³ In Dryden's **SECOND MISCELLANY**, which appeared in the same year, we find another Latin Poem, written by him, descriptive of Lord Arlington's Gardens.⁴ He also translated the Seventh Satire of Juvenal, which appeared in the version of that author published by his father in 1692. About that time he went to Italy, probably under the patronage of Cardinal Howard;⁵ and was so well recommended to Pope Innocent XII.,⁶ who

³ This collection also contains Verses by Prior, of St. John's; and by G. Stepney and Charles Montague, (afterwards Lord Halifax,) both of Trinity College. In the production of Montague, (an English poem of one hundred and fifty lines,) is the following little trait of Charles II.:

"In the *still gentle voice* he' lov'd to speak;

"But could with thunder harden'd rebels break."

⁴ They comprized the ground now occupied by Arlington-street, part of the Green-Park, and part of St. James's Park; Arlington-House standing where the Queen's House now does. Some does taking care of their fawns,—a duck-pond,—a green-house, stored with exotick plants,—and a maze or wilderness,—furnish the principal topicks of these encomiastick verses.

⁵ Philip, the third son of Henry, Earl of Arundel, and brother to Thomas, the fifth Duke of Norfolk. He was Lord Almoner to Queen Catharine, wife of Charles II., and was made a Cardinal by Pope Clement X. in May, 1675. He is represented by Burnet as a good-natured, moderate, candid man. He died at Rome, June 16, 1694. Charles Dryden and Cardinal Howard were third cousins, by the half blood.

⁶ Antonio Pignatelli, a Neapolitan. He was born in

had succeeded to the Papal Chair in the preceding year, at the age of seventy-six, that he was appointed Chamberlain of his Household, in which station he had the good fortune to serve a Pontiff universally beloved for his disinterestedness and beneficence; for, instead of following the practice of many of his predecessors, whose inordinate care and aggrandisement of their kindred had long been distinguished by the opprobrious name of *nepotism*, he was used to call all those who were poor and distressed, his *nephews*, bestowing on them a revenue equal to that which former Popes had lavished on their own relations.—On his removal to Rome, along with other recommendations, our poet's son carried with him a genealogical history of his family, drawn up in Latin by his father; which, to do him the more credit, was lodged in the Vatican, and is said to have contained a more ample and accurate account of the families of Dryden and Howard, than is to be found elsewhere.¹ At Rome, he wrote a poem in English, “on the Happiness of a Retired Life;” which being transmitted to England, was published in 1694, in Dryden's *FOURTH MISCELLANY*. From another periodical work we find, that he was

the year 1615, and died at Rome, greatly lamented, Sept. 27, 1700.

¹ From Lady Dryden, who died in 1791.—If Rome were not now (Oct. 1799) in the hands of French robbers, who, it is to be feared, have destroyed or carried away all the manuscripts in the Vatican, I should have endeavoured to procure from thence a copy of this paper.

The words and tune [of which
by Mr. C. Dryden." As the
met with, I subjoin these ver-
lieve, been preserved in any

- " As Ariana, young and
- " By night the starry
- " She found in Cassiope
- " One beauteous light
- " This happy star, unsee
- " Perhaps was kindled
- " And made for mortals
- " A new-born glory in
- " Or, if within the sphere
- " Before she gazed, the
- " But from her eyes the
- " That gave new lustre
- " Bright omen ! what dost
- " Thou threat'ning bear
- " What great, what happy
- " For sure by thee 'tis s

..

of his character. From some obscure passages in the letters of both his parents, he appears to have met with some accidental fall at Rome in the year 1697, which, beside a contusion in his head, was attended with other alarming symptoms. This mischance, however, did not prevent his return to England about the end of that year, or early in 1698, where we find him accompanying our author in his visits to his relations in Northamptonshire ;⁹ and after the death of his father, intestate, on Lady Elizabeth Dryden's renouncing, he administered (June 10th) to his effects, which probably did little more than pay his debts. In the following year, Mr. George Granville having altered and formed Shakspeare's *MERCHANT OF VENICE* into a drama which he entitled *THE JEW OF VENICE*, he gave the profits of that piece to Charles Dryden ; and two representations of it, (the third and the sixth,) were performed for his benefit.¹ A few years afterwards,

⁹ See our author's Letters to Mrs. Steward.

¹ Mr. Granville intended this play for Dryden's benefit ; but on his death, the profits of it were given to his eldest son. It is very probable that he had, in like manner, given Dryden the profits of his play entitled *HEROICK LOVE*, which was acted in January, 1697-8. At that time this was not uncommon. Sir Charles Sidley gave Shadwell the benefit of his *BELLAMIRA* in 1687.

The prologue to *THE JEW OF VENICE*, which, with this slight change of title, usurped the place of the original play for above forty years, was spoken by the Ghosts of Shakspeare and Dryden, who ascended from beneath the

unfortunately attempting to swim across the Thames near Datchet, he was drowned, and was buried at Windsor, August 20th, 1704.*

On Dryden's known confidence in the pretended science of judicial astrology, and his eldest son's accidental death, Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas, whom I have already had occasion to introduce to the reader's acquaintance, formed a tale not less curious than that which we have lately examined : " a narrative," says Dr. Johnson, " of some of Dryden's predictions wonderfully fulfilled ; but I know not the writer's means of information or character of veracity." However questionable her veracity may be, she certainly was furnished with some

stage, crowned with laurel ; and Mr. Bevil Higgons, the writer of it, *ventured* to make the representative of our great dramattick poet speak these lines !

" These scenes in their rough native dress were mine ;

" *But now, improved, with nobler lustre shine :*

" The first rude sketches Shakspeare's pencil drew,

" *But all the shining master-strokes are new.*

" This play, ye criticks, shall your fury stand,

" Adorn'd and rescued by a faultless hand."

To which our author replies,

" I long endeavour'd to support the stage,

" With the faint copies of thy nobler rage,

" But toil'd in vain for an ungenerous age ;

" They starv'd me living ; nay, denied me fame,

" And scarce, now dead, do justice to my name.

" Would you repent ? Be to my ashes kind ;

" Indulge the pledges I have left behind."

* Register of New Windsor, Berks.

information very convenient and well suited to her purpose, by writing about thirty years *after* some of these supposed predictions were fulfilled : yet, even with this advantage, such is the nature of falsehood, that we shall find as many absurdities and inconsistencies in this as in her former tale.

“ As Dryden (says Corinna) was a man of a versatile genius, he took great delight in judicial astrology, though only by himself. There were some incidents which proved his great skill, that were related to Lady Chudleigh¹ at the Bath, and which she desired *me* to ask Lady Elisabeth about, as *I after did*; which she not only confirmed by telling me the exact matter of fact, but added another, which has never been told to any, and which, I can solemnly aver, was some years before it came to pass. I purposely omitted these narratives in the Memoirs of Mr. Dryden, lest that this over-witty age, which so much ridicules prescience, should think the worse of all the rest : but if you desire particulars, they shall be freely at your service.”

These particulars being of course desired by the person here addressed, (Curll, or his writer of Memoirs,) the following Narrative was transmitted :

“ Notwithstanding Mr. Dryden was a great master of that branch of astronomy, called judicial

¹ The wife of Sir George Chudleigh, of Ashton, in Devonshire, Bart. The second edition of a volume of poems by this lady was published in 1709.

astrology, there were very few, scarce any, the most intimate of his friends, who knew of his amusements that way, except his own family. In the year 1707, that deservedly celebrated Lady Chudleigh, being at the Bath, *was told by the Lady Elisabeth*, of a very surprising instance of this judgement on his eldest son Charles's horoscope. Lady Chudleigh, whose superiour genius rendered her as little credulous on the topick of prescience, as she was on that of apparitions, yet withal was of so candid and curious a disposition, that she neither credited an attested tale on the quality or character of the relater, nor did she altogether despise it, though told by the most ignorant : her steady zeal for truth always led her to search to the foundation of it ; and on that principle, at her return to London, she spoke to a gentlewoman of her acquaintance,⁴ that was well acquainted in Mr. Dryden's family, to *ask his widow about it* ; which she accordingly did. It is true, report had added many incidents to matter of fact ; but the *real truth* take from Lady Elisabeth's *own mouth*, in these words :

“ When I was in labour of Charles, Mr. Dryden being told it was decent to withdraw, laid his watch on the table, begging one of the ladies, then present, in a most solemn manner, to take an exact

⁴ From what has preceded and what follows, it appears that this gentlewoman was Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas herself.

notice of the very minute when the child was born : which she did, and acquainted him therewith. This passed without any singular notice ; many fathers having had such a fancy, without any farther thought. But about a week after, when I was pretty hearty, he comes into my room, ‘ My dear,’ says he, ‘ you little think what I have been doing this morning.’ ‘ Nor ever shall,’ said I, ‘ unless you will be so good to inform me.’ ‘ Why then,’ cried he, ‘ I have been calculating this child’s nativity ; and in grief I speak it, he was born in an evil hour ; Jupiter, Venus, and the Sun, were all under the Earth, and the Lord of his Ascendant afflicted by a hateful square of Mars and Saturn.’ If he lives to arrive at his eighth year, he will go near to die a violent death on his very birthday ; but if he should escape, as I see but small hopes, he will in his *twenty-third* year be under the same evil direction. And if he should, which seems almost impossible, escape that also, the thirty-third or thirty-fourth year is, I fear, - - - - I interrupted him here,—‘ O ! Mr. Dryden, what is this you tell me ? my blood runs cold at your fatal speech ; recall it, I beseech you.

’ Here Corinna is indebted to our author. See the Prologue to *THE WILD GALLANT* :

“ *FIRST ASTROL.* Yet let me judge it by the rules of art.
First *Jupiter*, the *ascendant’s* lord disgraced,
In the twelfth house, and near grim *Saturn* placed,
Denote short life . . .”

Shall my little angel, my Dryden⁶ boy, be doomed to so hard a fate ? Poor innocent ! what hast thou done ? No ; I will fold thee in my arms, and if thou must fall, we will both perish together.' A flood of tears put a stop to my speech ; and through Mr. Dryden's comfortable persuasions, and the distance of time, I began to be a little appeased, but always kept the fatal period in my mind.

" At last the summer arrived ; August was the inauspicious month, in which my dear son was to enter on his eighth year. The Court being in Progress, and Mr. Dryden at leisure, he was invited to my brother Berkshire's, to keep the long vacation with him at Charlton, in Wilts ; I was also invited to *my uncle* Mordaunt's, to pass the remainder of the summer at his country-seat. *All this was well enough* ; but when we came to dividing the children, I would have had him take John, and let me have the care of Charles ; because, as I told him, a man might be engaged in company, but a woman could have no pretence for not guarding of the evil hour. Poor Mr. Dryden was in this too absolute, and I as positive. In fine, we parted in anger ; and, as a husband always will be master, he took Charles, and I was forced to be content with my son John. But when the fatal day approached, such anguish of heart seized me, as none but a fond mother can form any idea

⁶ Probably a mistake of the press, for—" my *darling* boy."

of. I watched the post ; that failed ; I wrote and wrote, but no answer. Oh, my friend, judge what I endured, terrified with dreams, tormented by my apprehensions. I abandoned myself to despair, and remained inconsolable.

“ The anxiety of my spirits occasioned such an effervescence of my blood, as threw me into so violent a fever, that my life was despaired of ; when a letter came from my spouse, reproving my womanish credulity, and assured me all was well, and the child in perfect health : on which I mended daily, and recovered my wonted state of ease ; till about six weeks after the fatal day, I received an *eclaircissement* from Mr. Dryden, with a full account of the whole truth, which belike he feared to acquaint me with, till the danger was over. It was this : in the month of August, being Charles's anniversary, it happened that Lord Berkshire had made a general hunting-match, to which were invited all the adjacent gentlemen : Mr. Dryden being at his house, and his brother-in-law, could not be dispensed with from appearing.

“ I have told you, that Mr. Dryden, either through fear of being thought superstitious, or thinking it a science beneath his study, was extremely cautious in letting any one know that he was a dabbler in astrology ; therefore could not excuse his absence from the sport ; but he took care to set the boy a double exercise in the Latin tongue, (which he taught his children himself,) with a strict charge not to stir out of the room till

his return, well knowing the task he had set him would take up longer time. Poor Charles was all obedience, and sat close to his duty; when, as ill fate ordained, the stag made towards the house. The noise of the dogs, horns, &c. alarmed the family to partake of the sport; and one of the servants coming down stairs, the door being open, saw the child hard at his exercise without being moved:—‘Master,’ cried the fellow, ‘why do you sit there? Come down, come down, and see the sport.’ ‘No,’ replied Charles, ‘my papa has forbid me, and I dare not.’ ‘Pish,’ quoth *the clown*, ‘vather shall never know it:’ so takes the child by the hand, and leads him away; when just as they came to the gate, the stag, being at bay with the dogs, cut a bold stroke, and leaped over the court-wall, which was very low and very old; and the dogs following, threw down at once a part of the wall *ten yards in length*, under which my dear child lay buried. He was as soon as possible dug out; but, alas! how mangled! his poor little head *being crushed to a perfect mash*.

“In this miserable condition he continued above six weeks, without the least hope of life. Through the divine Providence, he recovered; and in process of time, having a most advantageous invitation to Rome from *my uncle*, Cardinal Howard, we sent over our two sons, Charles and John, having through the grace of God been ourselves admitted into the true Catholick faith. They were received suitable to the grandeur and generosity of his

Eminence, and Charles immediately planted in a post of honour, as Gentleman-Usher to his Holiness; in which he continued about nine years. But what occasions me to mention this, is in allusion to my dear Mr. Dryden's too fatal prediction. In his *twenty-third* year, being in perfect health, he had attended some ladies of the palace, his Holiness's *nieces*, as it was his place, on a party of pleasure: his brother John and he lodged together, at the top of an old round tower belonging to the Vatican, with a well staircase, much like the Monument; when he knew his brother Charles was returned, he went up, thinking to find him there, and to go to bed. But, alas! no brother was there: on which he made a strict enquiry at all the places he used to frequent; but no news, more, than that he was seen by the centinel to go up the staircase. On which he got an order for the door of the foundation of the tower to be opened, where they found my poor unfortunate son Charles *mashed to a mummy*, and weltering in his own blood. How this happened, he gave no farther account when he could speak, than that the heat of the day had been most excessive, and as he came to the top of the tower, he found himself seized with a megrim, or swimming in his head, and leaning against the iron rails, it is to be supposed, *tipp'd over, five stories deep*. Under this grievous mischance, his Holiness, (God bless him!) omitted nothing that might conduce to his recovery; but as he lay many months without hopes of life, so

thirty-fourth year, he or I sh
but he could not say whi
heartily pray it may be myse
thousand fears [from] *the d*
sends to Lord Jefferies, on
ment of my dear Mr. Dryde
has some value for you, I be
that you would dissuade him
from taking that sort of just
lest it should fulfil his dear fa

“ Thus far Lady Elisabeth’s

“ This, if required, I can
long before Mr. Charles died
remembrance it was in 1701 c
positive, which. But in 1703
seized with a nervous fever, w
her memory and understanding
be termed a moral death,) th
years after. But Mr. Charle

An observation made by Dr. Johnson on our author, is extremely applicable to Corinna: "Give her but matter for her words, and she never wants words for her matter." If the course of her narrative require a speech to be made, she is never at a loss, but always has one ready, and to the purpose. Whatever the age, situation, or other circumstances, of the parties concerned may be, whether they be children or at years of discretion, of sound mind or insane, they still are sure to talk rationally, and to say what is most proper for the occasion; and so retentive was her memory, that it never failed to supply her with *the very words* they uttered.

On the absurd incongruities of her second tale a very few remarks will suffice.—It is clear from this narrative, that she conceived that Charles Dryden, at the time of his death, was either thirty-three or thirty-four years old; and of course that he was born in 1670 or 1671: for she knew that he was drowned in the month of August, 1704. She knew also, it appears, that his birthday was in that month; and probably she had heard from his parents, that some accident had happened to him, when he was about eight years old; and that he had suffered some injury by a fall at Rome, in the year 1693 or 1694. On these *data* she constructed her tale of predictions wonderfully fulfilled; which a very slight examination will shew to have been her own clumsy amplification of a

few known facts, without even the semblance of consistency or probability.

She begins by informing us, that some extraordinary incidents which evinced Dryden's great skill in judicial astrology, had been related to Lady Chudleigh at Bath, and that this Lady desired her to obtain from Lady Elizabeth Dryden the best information she could get concerning them : but immediately afterwards she says, that this tale of wonders was originally told to Lady Chudleigh at Bath in the year 1707, *by Lady Elizabeth Dryden herself*; notwithstanding which, she requested a gentlewoman, who appears to have been Corinna herself, to interrogate Lady Elizabeth Dryden particularly concerning these incidents; which she accordingly did; and then she subjoins a long narrative, taken from that Lady's *own mouth*, and *in her very words*. Corinna had previously informed us, that our author's widow, in the year 1709, became insane, and never afterwards recovered her understanding. We will, however, waive this inconsistency, and suppose that her information was derived from Lady Elizabeth Dryden in 1702, before her mind became deranged, and two years before the death of her eldest son.

The age of *eight* being fixed on as the era of the first incident, the year in which it happened; according to Corinna's reckoning, must have been either 1678 or 1679. In the summer then of one of those years, while the King was making a Pro-

gress, we are to suppose¹ that Dryden was invited to spend some months at Charlton, then the residence of his brother-in-law, Charles, the second Earl of Berkshire; but, says his Lady, "I was invited to pass the summer at my *uncle Mordaunt's* country-seat. *This* (she adds) *was well enough*:" meaning, doubtless, the being separated from her husband for some months!—In June, 1677, Henry Howard, the seventh Duke of Norfolk, was married to Mary,¹ the only daughter of Henry Mordaunt, second Earl of Peterborough. Lady Elizabeth Dryden was second cousin, by the half blood, to Henry Frederick, Earl of Arundel, grandfather to this seventh Duke of Norfolk; and the Duke and her grandchild, if she had had one, would have been *fourth* cousins. On this

¹ In 1685 her husband, the Duke of Norfolk, separated himself from her; and in November, 1693, having brought an action in the King's Bench against Sir John Germain, for criminal conversation with the Duchess, he obtained a verdict; but only one hundred marks, (£.66. 13. 4.) as damages. April 11th, 1700, they were divorced by act of parliament. Soon after the Duke's death, which happened in 1701, she married her gallant, Sir John Germain, a Dutch soldier of fortune, who had been made a Baronet by King William, in 1698. The Duchess of Norfolk died in 1705, and left him a large estate in Northamptonshire, which on his marriage afterwards with Lady Elizabeth Berkeley, (Swift's celebrated correspondent), was settled on her, and, on his death in 1718, became her property. The husband of that accomplished lady was so extremely ignorant, as the late Horace, Earl

solid ground it is, that, after his marriage, his wife's father, Henry, Earl of Peterborough, became Lady Elizabeth Dryden's *uncle*. Unluckily, however, he could not, even by the courtesy of the last age, have been considered as any relation whatsoever of our poet's wife; though she and his daughter, in consequence of her marriage, according to the fashion of those days might have been accounted third, or rather fourth cousins.

Whether Charles the Second made any Progress in August 1678, or 1679, I shall not stay to inquire; though probably the inquiry would not add much credibility to this narrative. The age of Charles Dryden, alone, is fatal to it; for in either of those years, instead of being eight years old, he was either thirteen or fourteen; and not very long afterwards was elected a King's Scholar into Westminster School: so that whatever accident happened to him at that period of his life, can have no relation to Dryden's supposed prediction, which was to be fulfilled in his son's eighth year; and if, on the

of Orford, told me, that at one period of his life he conceived that St. Matthew's Gospel was written by Sir Matthew Decker; to whom by his will, which was proved December 12, 1718, (PRE. OFF. Tennyson, 238,) he consigned the distribution of £.200, which he bequeathed to the poor of the Dutch Congregation in London.—This extraordinary instance of gross ignorance was communicated to Lord Orford by the Lady Viscountess Fitzwilliam, a very grave and sensible woman, who was Sir Matthew Decker's daughter.

other hand, it should be contended, that he was buried under a wall, thirty feet long, *tipp'd* over by a pack of hounds in full cry, in 1673, when he really was of that age, then some degree of embarrassment will arise from his mother being in that year at the country-seat of her pretended *uncle Mordaunt*; no kind of relationship subsisting between even the house of Norfolk and Peterborough, till some years afterwards.

Lady Elizabeth Dryden (according to Corinna,) next informs us, that her son having escaped this misfortune, in due time accepted a kind invitation from another *uncle* of her's, Cardinal Howard, and removed to Rome; where, in his *twenty-third* year, agreeably to his father's prediction, he met with another dreadful accident: however, notwithstanding his falling from the top of *one* of the Towers of the Vatican,⁸ *five stories* high, and nearly resembling the Monument, by which he was *mashed to a mummy*, he yet survived to tell this marvellous tale; being fated, it seems, to another kind of death. We cannot suppose a mother ignorant or forgetful of

⁸ In the Vatican there are said to be eleven thousand rooms; but there is no tower of any kind connected with it. This dreadful accident, Corinna tells us, happened to Charles Dryden, shortly after he had been in attendance on some *ladies of the palace*, the Pope's *nieces*. But unfortunately the Pope never entertains any females in the Vatican; nor have the ladies of Rome any opportunity of seeing his Holiness, except at church, in a procession, or on a journey.

the age of her own child : unluckily, however, her son, Charles, attained his twenty-third year in 1688; when he was in London, and might indeed have tumbled from the top of the Monument, but could not, without the legs of Garagantua, have ascended one of the *supposed* towers of the Vatican : nor did he visit Rome till some years afterwards. As for Cardinal Howard, under whose patronage it is very probable he went there, it has already been shewn that he was young Dryden's *third cousin*, and instead of being *uncle*, was scarcely second cousin to his mother.

To conclude these fantastick figments, we are told that this Lady was exceedingly apprehensive of her son's dying a violent death in his thirty-third or thirty-fourth year ; which his father had predicted, and she feared the more, on account of the frequent challenges sent by her son to Lord Jefferies, in consequence of the outrage committed by that nobleman, at the time of Dryden's funeral. What ground she had for apprehension from a rencounter between Lord Jefferies and her son, we have already seen ; and if in 1702 she dreaded that he should die in his thirty-third or thirty-fourth year, her wits must have already left her ; as those two years of his life had previously passed over without any signal calamity ; for they were the years 1698 and 1699 ; which he spent either in excursions with his father into Northamptonshire, or sitting quietly by the fire-side in his house in London.

On these absurd and ridiculous fictions I have perhaps, dwelt too long : but absurd as they are, let it be remembered, that for above half a century they have been transmitted from book to book ;¹ a refutation, therefore, which may prevent their obtaining hereafter the slightest degree of notice, or being ever again admitted into any biographical work, cannot be entirely useless.

Though Corinna's account be wholly unworthy of credit, it cannot, however, be denied, that Dryden was weak enough to confide in the science of astrology, in which he was countenanced by some distinguished men of the last age :² and it is extremely probable that he had predicted at the birth of his eldest son, that some calamity would happen to him in his *eighth* and *twenty-eighth* year; and that both his predictions were fortuitously fulfilled. We know from his letter to him, written in September, 1697, that he had calculated his nativity ; and he has himself told us, that every

¹ Cibber's LIVES OF THE POETS, BIOGRAPHIA DRAMATICA, &c.

² Robert Burton, author of the ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY, Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, George, Earl of Bristol, the first Earl of Shaftesbury, the Cardinals Richelieu, and Mazarin, &c.

Sir Isaac Newton, it is well known, in the early part of his life, was captivated by this idle and vain study :—
" There was a time, (as Mr. Spence has mentioned in his ANECDOTES, quoting the words of Dr. Lockier,) when he was possessed with the old fooleries of astrology ; and another, when he was so far gone in chemistry, as to be upon the hunt after the Philosopher's stone."

thing, to that time, had happened according to his prediction: from other passages it may be collected, that Charles Dryden had suffered much by some accidental fall at Rome: and a tradition is yet preserved in the family descended from our author's brother, that on the poet's death, his eldest son found in his pocket-book the horoscope in which several of the calamities of his life were predicted.² Among these, however, could not have been enumerated any mischance likely to befall him in his thirty-*third* or thirty-*fourth* year, that is, in 1698 or 1699; because Dryden himself, speaking of the nativity which he had cast, assures his son, that towards the end of September, 1697, he would begin to recover his perfect health.—From a memorandum in one of the Manuscripts of Oldys, the Antiquary,³ it should seem, that he had some confidence also in oneirocriticism, and sup-

² Communicated by Lady Dryden, who derived her information from the widow of her grandfather, Edward Dryden, Esq.

³ "The story (says Oldys, in his Notes on Langbaine,) of Mr. Dryden's dream at Lord Exeter's at Burleigh, while he was translating Virgil, as Signor Verrio, then painting there, related it to the Yorkshire painter, of whom I had it, lies in the parchment-book in quarto, designed for his life." At a subsequent period Oldys added—"Now entered therein:"—but where either the loose prophetick leaf, or the parchment-book now is, I know not.—Antonio Verrio, a Neapolitan painter, was employed at Burleigh by John, the fifth Earl of Exeter, from the time of the Revolution to the year 1698, in various works

posed that future events were sometimes prognosticated by dreams, as well as by the configuration of the stars.

John, our author's second son, was born probably in 1667 or 1668, and after having been initiated in classical learning at some inferior seminary, or under his father's care, was admitted a King's Scholar in the College of Westminster, in his fourteenth or fifteenth year, (1682,) and continued on that foundation till 1685, when he was elected to Oxford. Notwithstanding this circumstance, he does not appear to have been admitted a Student of Christ Church.⁴ About the time of his election, his father had become a convert to popery; to the tenets of which religion his sincere and disinterested attachment is evinced by a letter written at a late period of his life.—Wishing therefore to breed his sons in his new faith,⁵ he probably was unwilling that John should

during which time his noble patron allowed him a pension, with an equipage and servants to attend him.—In 1695 or 1696, Dryden spent part of the summer at Burleigh.

⁴ It appears from the Register of Westminster Scholars, that John Dryden, Jun., (with others,) was elected to a Studentship of Christ-Church, in 1685; but he never was a Student; for the admission-book of Students (which the Rev. Dr. Holmes, Canon of Christ-Church, has obligingly examined for the purpose of ascertaining this fact,) contains the names of all those who were elected from Westminster with him, but the name of Dryden does not there appear.

be matriculated as a member of the University, and chose rather to place him under the private tuition⁶ of Obadiah Walker, Master of University College, at that time, a concealed, and in the following year, an avowed, papist, with whom I suspect he remained till the Revolution; soon after which event, Walker was ejected from the Mastership of that college.⁷ Such at least is the

⁶ In a lampoon of the last age, in the form of a Dialogue in Bedlam, between Oliver's mad Porter, Sir Roger L'Estrange, and Dryden, (STATE POEMS, iii. 241.) the writer foolishly attributes our author's conversion to the arguments urged by one of his sons in favour of popery:

"Men best themselves 'gainst open foes defend,

"But perish surely by a seeming friend.

"*One son turn'd me*, I turn'd the other two,

"But had not an indulgence, Sir, like you."

⁶ The admission-book of University College has been examined, but it does not appear that Jolin Dryden, Jun. was a regular member of that college; nor was he ever matriculated in the University of Oxford.

⁷ See Wood's *ATHEN. OXON.* vol. ii. col. 933.—About the end of March, 1686, says Wood, "Mr. Walker became a bye-word among the protestants in Oxon and elsewhere; was abused to his face, when met in the publick streets and lanes; and had songs made of him (*Obadiah, Ave maria.*) by the connivance of the Magistrates. After Mr. Walker had declared [himself a papist], he had private mass in his lodgings, till such times as he could make and furnish a chapel within the limits of his college; which being done according to his mind, by converting two lower rooms on the east side of the quadrangle

suggestion of a lampoon published at that period.* Dryden has told us, that his second son left England, when he ought to have begun the study of

for that purpose, he opened it for a publick use, on Sunday the 15th of August, 1686 ; to which resorted some scholars, some inhabitants of Oxon, and many troopers quartered therein : but the junior scholars, and the *mobile*, looking upon it as a foppery, diverse affronts were given to the priest and auditory."

In October, 1689, Obadiah Walker was committed to the Tower ; but in the following January, having been brought into the King's Bench by *Habeas Corpus*, he was enlarged upon bail. Being, however, excepted in the Act of General Pardon passed in the following May, he probably fled from England, and died abroad. He was the author of a book entitled " The Greek and Roman History illustrated by Coins and Medals," 8vo. 1692 ; a Treatise on Education ; and various other works.

* In " The [pretended] Address of John Dryden, Laureate, to his Highness the Prince of Orange," folio, 1689, (which is in Mr. Bindley's Collection, and was published, as appears from a manuscript note by Mr. Luttrell, January 30, 1688-9,) are the following lines :

" But if, great Prince, my feeble strength shall fail,

" Thy theme I'll to my successors entail ;

" My heirs th' unfinish'd subject shall complete ;—

" I have a son ; and he, by all that's great, . . .

" Shall, by his sire's example, Rome renounce,

" For he, young stripling, yet has turn'd but once :

" That Oxford nurseling, that sweet hopeful boy,

" His father's, and that once Ignatian, joy,

" Design'd for a new Bellarmine Goliath,

" Under the great Gamaliel, Obadiah,—

of his native language. He probably went to Rome, with his elder brother, about the end of the year 1692,* when he was about four-and-twenty; and after having spent some time there, became an officer of the Pope's household, officiating as deputy to his brother Charles, after his departure from Italy about the middle of the year 1698. Previously to his leaving England, he translated the fourteenth Satire of Juvenal, which makes part of the version published by Dryden; and, while he resided at Rome, he wrote a comedy entitled **THE HUSBAND HIS OWN CUCKOLD**, which was acted at the Theatre in Lincoln's-Inn Fields, in

" This youth, Great Sir, shall your fame's trumpet blow,
 " And soar, when my dull wings shall flag below;
 " A protestant Herculean column stand,
 " When I, a poor weak pillar of the land,
 " Now growing old, and [am] crumbling into sand." }

Oldys mentions in his Manuscript Notes on Langbaine, that he had two copies in manuscript of Dryden's " Poem to King William," with a discourse prefixed, containing " An Apology for his past Life and Writings, dedicated to the Lord Dorset;" which he rightly supposed to have been an imposition on the world in Dryden's name, and to have been written with a view of ridiculing him.— This poem, however, and that above quoted, should seem to have been different; for to the latter, which contains only six pages, and the titlepage, there is no discourse prefixed.

* His name appears as a witness to a contract between his father and Jacob Tonson, dated October 6th, 1691, which will be found in a subsequent page.

the winter of the year 1696, under his father's care, who assisted him with a Prologue, as Congreve did with an Epilogue. It was published in the summer of that year, with a Preface by our author. The younger John does not appear to have ever visited England, after he first left it. At the time of his father's death, he certainly was in Italy; and about six months afterwards, in company with Mr. Cecil, probably a younger son of John, the fifth Earl of Exeter, he made a tour to Sicily and Malta, of which his account, after remaining many years in manuscript, was published in 1776. Soon after his return to Rome from that excursion, (January 28, 1701, N. S.) he is said to have died there, of a fever.

Erasmus-Henry, the third son, was born May 2, 1669, and admitted a Scholar at the Charter-House, on the nomination of Charles the Second,

' It was advertised as published, in the London Gazette, No. 3200, July 23, 1696. In the Dedication of this piece (dated Rome, August 20, 1695,) to his uncle Sir Robert Howard, the author delivers an opinion which we find at a subsequent period in Rowe's Life of Shakspeare :

" Shakspeare," says young Dryden, " among all the writers of our nation, may stand himself as a Phoenix, the first and last of his order; in whom bounteous nature wonderfully supplied all the parts of a great poet and excellent orator, and of whom alone one may venture boldly to say, that *had he had more learning, perhaps he might have been less a poet.*"

February 5, 1682-3.² In their Register is an entry, by which I learn that he left the House on the 2d of November, 1685, and was "elected to the University;" yet it does not appear that he became a member of either Oxford or Cambridge, probably from the same cause which prevented his brother John from accepting a Studentship of Christ Church. Like his brothers, he also went to Rome; and I do not find that he returned to England before his father's death. He is said by Mrs. Thomas, whose fictions have been already detected, to have been a priest, and domestick chaplain to Mary, Duchess of Norfolk;³ whom she has untruly represented as his near relation. By this lady we are also told, that he was allowed a liberal salary by the Duchess, and thirty pounds a year by the college in Flanders, where she tells us he was bred. But all these circumstances were mere inventions. He was not a minister of religion, but a Captain in the Pope's Guards;⁴ and probably re-

² See p. 149, n. 4.

³ See p. 415. About the time Mrs. Thomas became acquainted with Dryden, he was in the habit of visiting the Duchess of Norfolk; a circumstance which probably gave rise to this fiction.

⁴ Mr. Spence mentions in his ANECDOTES, that Pope said to him,—“Dryden had three or four sons; John, Erasmus, Charles, and perhaps another. One of them was a Priest, and another a Captain in the Pope's Guards.” But he was deceived by our author's younger son having two Christian names; for Dryden certainly had but three

mained at Rome till after the death of his elder brother. Sir Robert Driden, our author's first cousin, who was unmarried, and died at Canons-Ashby on the 19th of August, 1708, at the age of seventy-six, by his will devised his estate to his kinsman, Edward Dryden, the eldest son of Erasmus, a younger brother of the Poet ; passing by

sons. Mrs. Thomas probably led him into the other error, that one of them was a priest ; for this conversation passed in 1736, some years after her spurious narrative was published. The other part of his information was correct ; for Erasmus-Henry was certainly a Captain (and probably as he stated, a Captain in the Pope's Guards) ; as appears from the account-books of his uncle, Erasmus, in one of which are the following entries :

" Rec^d March y^e first, 1709, [1709-10,] of Jo. Williams, to pay *Captain* Dryden my sonn's money rent account—10*l.* 0*s.* 0*d.*"

The same sum is entered again in another place thus :
" March y^e first, [1709-10] of Jo. Williams, payd to *Captain* Dryden, 10*l.* 0*s.* 0*d.*"

" 22 May, 1710. Rec^d per Jo. Williams, twenty pounds, payd to Sir *Erasmus* Dryden, per sonn Dryden's order. [He had succeeded to the title only a day or two before.]

" Rec^d about August the seaventh [1710], paid to Sir Eras. Dryden, by my sonn Mr. Edw. Dryden, before he came to Ashby,—20*l.* 0*s.* 0*d.*"

In the year 1712, he drew up the following Account for the three preceding years, including the sums paid to Sir Erasmus-Henry Dryden, for part of that time, (both before and after he was a Baronet,) and to his mother before and after his death :

Erasmus-Henry, the poet's youngest son, and a still nearer relation, to whom the title devolved,—

“ Lady Dryden and Sir Eras. Accompt for 3 years.	
“ A receipt in full to Lady [day] per Sir Eras. 1709.	
“ Paid, as appears by receipts, to Sir Eras. and Mr. Shaw, [receiver for Lady Eliza- beth Dryden.]	100 <i>l</i> .
“ To Mr. Hodges [the Apothecary who attended Sir Erasmus-Henry Dryden in his last illness.]	15 0 0
“ To funeral charges	6 1 4
“ Per receipts	121 1 4
“ Rec ^d from Lady [Lady-day] 1709 to Michellmas, 1710, one year and halfe, at 6 <i>l</i> . per ann.	90 0 0
“ From Mickelmas 1710 to Lady [Lady- day,] 1712, Lady [E. Dryden's] <i>Thirde</i> , 1 year and halfe, at 2 <i>l</i> . per ann. . . .	30 0 0
“ Rec ^d of my dau. Dryden, [the wife of his son, Edward Dryden,] by moneys from Sir Eras. twenty-three shillings, [probably the money in his pocket, when he died.]	1 3 0
	121 3 0
“ Due to cash	0 1 8

In the rough draft of this account, the sum above mentioned, paid to *Captain* Dryden in March 1709-10, is specified. His uncle appears to have occasionally supplied him with ten pounds at a time; and the nephew,

John Dryden, the eldest son of William Dryden, of Farndon, in the county of Northampton, who was the second son of Sir Erasmus Driden, the first Baronet of this family. Sir John Dryden enjoyed this unsubstantial honour but about a year and a half, dying, without issue male, at Woodford, in Northamptonshire, where he was buried, May the 22d, 1710 ;¹ and by his death the title of Baronet devolved on the poet's third son, Erasmus-Henry. From the time his kinsman, Edward, became possessed of the family estate in 1708, Erasmus-Henry probably was an inmate at Canons-Ashby, where he appears to have resided after he succeeded to the title ; and from various entries in the account-books of his uncle Erasmus, respecting the rents of the patrimonial estate in Northamptonshire, which were regularly received by him for the use of his nephew, though he was himself on the spot, I imagine he was in a state of mental imbecility, derived perhaps, from his mother. He lived little more than six months after his accession to the title ; for having died at the family mansion in the forty-second year of his age, he was interred in the church of Canons-Ashby, December 4th, 1710.²

it should seem, was sometimes obliged to borrow from him very small sums ; for at the bottom of the last account made up in 1712, I find—" Lent at divers times to Sir Eras.—19s."

¹ Register of the parish of Woodford.

² Register of Canons-Ashby.

By his death the title was transferred to his uncle, Erasmus, who survived him near eight years, dying at the same place, November 3, 1718, at the age of eighty-two; and his son Edward having died in the preceding year, John Dryden, the eldest grandson⁷ of Erasmus, became the seventh Baronet; and the family estate and dignity were in his person once more united.

Dr. Johnson conceived, that no description of Dryden's person had been transmitted to us; but, on the contrary, there are few English poets, of whose external appearance more particulars have been recorded. We have not indeed any original whole-length portrait of him, such as that very curious delineation of Pope, with which we have been lately gratified, whence a more perfect notion of that poet's external appearance may be obtained than from all the friendly drawings of Richardson; yet from various descriptions of Dryden's person that have come down to us, a very adequate idea of it may be formed. He was certainly a short, fat, florid man,⁸ "*corpore quadrato*," as Lord Hailes

⁷ Edward Dryden, the eldest son of the last Sir Erasmus Dryden, left by his wife, Elizabeth Allen, who died in London in 1761, five sons; the youngest of whom, Bevil, was father of the present Lady Dryden. Sir John, the eldest, survived all his brothers, and died without issue, at Canons-Ashby, March 20, 1770.

⁸ So, *perhaps*, in Radcliffe's *NEWS FROM HELL*, 1682:

"Laureat, who was both learn'd and *florid*,

"Was damn'd long since for *silence horrid*."

some years ago observed to me; "a description which Æneas Sylvius applied to James the First of Scotland." The same gentleman remarked, that at one time he wore his hair in large quantity, and that it inclined to gray, even before his misfortunes; a circumstance which, he said, he had learned from a portrait of Dryden, painted by Kneller, formerly in the possession of the late Mr. James West. But perhaps his Lordship here is not quite accurate. By "before his misfortunes" was meant, before the Revolution; but the portrait in question, I suspect, was painted at a later period. From other documents, however, it appears that he became gray, before he was deprived of the laurel.*

Again, in *THE MEDAL OF JOHN BAYES*, 4to. 168a :

"Methinks, the ghost of Horace there I see,

"Lashing this *cherry-cheek'd* dunce of fifty-three."

(Blockheads, it is observable, in all ages have vented their spleen against men of parts, by calling them *dunces*.)

See also *THE HIND AND THE PANTHER TRANSVERSED*, 1687 :—"Smith. What, is not there good eating and drinking on both sides? You make the separation greater than I thought it.

"Bayes. No, no : whenever you see a *fat rosy-colour'd* fellow, take it from me, he is either a Protestant or a Turk.

"Smith. At that rate, Mr. Bayes, one might suspect your conversion : methinks, thou hast as much the face of an heretick as ever I saw.

"Bayes. 'Such was I, such by nature still I am.' But I hope ere long I shall have drawn this pampered *paunch* fitter for the strait gate."

* See *THE LAUREAT*, 1687 :

"See there a youth, a shame to thy *gray hairs*,

"Make a mere dunce of all thy threescore years."

In Riley's portrait, painted in 1683, he wears a very large wig: so also in that by Closterman, done at a later period. By Tom Brown he is

Probably, however, he had not divested himself of his wig, when these lines were written.

The earliest portrait of Dryden hitherto discovered is that in the Picture Gallery at Oxford; which, together with the portraits of Buchanan, Ben Jonson, Dr. Aldrich, and Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, was presented by George Clarke, Esq., Fellow of All-Souls College, who represented the University of Oxford in parliament from 1715 to 1735. He was contemporary with Dryden, for he was born probably about the time of the Restoration; having taken the degree of M. A. in 1683; of B. C. L. in 1686, and in 1708 that of D. C. L. Dr. Clarke had travelled into Italy, and was well acquainted with ancient and modern pictures. From this portrait, which is dated in 1655, but appears from the dress to have been painted soon after the Restoration, the Engraving, No. 1, prefixed to this volume, was made. The painter is not known.

The Portrait of Dryden painted by Riley in 1683, from which an engraving was made by Peter Van-Gunst, for the first octavo edition of his *Virgil*, published in 1709, is in the possession of William Davenport Bromley, of Baginton Hall, in Warwickshire, Esq., the representative of the Right Hon. William Bromley, Speaker of the House of Commons in the reign of Queen Anne; from whom it descended to the above-mentioned gentleman. The poet here holds a sprig of laurel in his hand; is dressed in a loose gown of a yellow-brown colour, and wears a large wig. This picture, I am informed, is still in perfect preservation.

In "THE LAUREL, a poem on the Poet Laureate," which was published in 4to. in January, 1684-5, are the

always called "*little Bayes*;" and by Rochester, when he quarrelled with him and wished to de-

following lines relative to this portrait, from which it should seem that our author was never painted by Lely:

- " But O, for some immortal hand, that can
- " Make thee live too, even in thy outward man !
- " Thy pen, which only could, has drawn thy mind :
- " But where for this shall we a pencil find ?
- " Famed Vandyck's dead, and Lely is no more ;
- " And Fate for this has left but one in store.
- " The matchless Riley is for this design'd ;
- " For this, kind Fates, ye Riley left behind.
- " See the bold piece with its own object strive ;
- " It strives for verse, and would be more alive.
- " See all the Muses drawn within his face,
- " Or features that would all the Muses grace.
- " It grieves me, that there any thing should be,
- " Beside thyself, to give such life to thee.
- " Then only give to him that makes thee live,
- " What my poor mortal pen can never give :
- " Give him the life that triumphs o'er the grave,
- " The life that Cowley to his Vandyck gave.
- " Weak artless hands can postures, dresses draw ;
- " From their loose strokes those looser figures flow :
- " Give me that master's hand, that art divine,
- " That shews my face, and shews it to be mine.
- " All that proud Athens boasts, or stately Rome,
- " Does from their poets or their painters come :
- " Here both conspire to make one masterpiece,
- " The pride and shame of Italy and Greece."

From Closterman's portrait of Dryden, (see p. 437.) a mezzotinto was made by William Faithorne, jun. which has been copied for the present work. See No. 2. I know not where the original picture now is.

preciate him, he was nick-named—Poet Squab. From an epigram written soon after his death, we

Sir Godfrey Kneller appears to have painted several portraits of Dryden. That which was presented by our author to his kinsman of Chesterton, was a half-length, and finely painted. In this portrait the poet wears a wig, and holds a sprig of laurel in his hand. It is not known where it now is. See p. 326, n. 2. In p. 327, I have supposed that this picture was presented by our author to his kinsman, in consequence of the present made by Mr. John Driden in return for the poem addressed to him; but a letter which has since come to my hands, shews, that could hardly have been the case; for his kinsman's donation appears to have been made only about a month before the poet's death.

From another portrait, also in a wig, an engraving was made immediately after Dryden's death; and prefixed to LUCTUS BRITANNICI. Neither the painter, nor engraver, is known. Here the poet holds the laurel in his *right* hand: in the two following portraits in his *left*. It was copied for Nichols's Select Collection of Poems, in eight volumes. I know not where this picture now is.

The portrait of him painted by Kneller, in his gray hair, from which Edelinck made an engraving at Paris in 1700, belonged to Jacob Tonson, and is now in the Collection of William Baker, Esq. Member of Parliament for Hertfordshire. It was painted, I believe, in 1698. Edelinck's print, from which No. 3, prefixed to this volume, is copied, is unquestionably the finest engraving of Dryden that has hitherto appeared. A bad copy of it was made in 1702, by S. Coignard. Either the portrait from which Edelinck's print was done, or that above mentioned, (which also may have been painted by Kneller,) is highly commended for its spirit and truth, by B. Buck-

learn, that he wanted that vivid eye for which Pope was distinguished.*

eridge, the Continuator of De Piles: see *LUCTUS BRITANNICI*, p. 48.

From another portrait also by Kneller, formerly in the possession of Edward, Earl of Oxford, an engraving was made by Vertue in 1730; and Houbraken, in 1743, made another engraving from the same picture, which is among the *ILLUSTRIOUS HEADS*. The picture which Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes, saw in the possession of the late James West, Esq., (See p. 431.) was, I suspect, that which had belonged to Lord Oxford; which probably fell into Mr. West's hands, on the sale of that nobleman's fine collection of books and pictures in the year 1742.

A writer in the *GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE* for April, 1792, vol. 62, part i. p. 293, says, that "there is an original portrait of Dryden, by Kneller, in the possession of Ralph Sneyd, Esq. of Kiel, in Staffordshire, one of whose ancestors [William Sneyd] married Frances, daughter of Sir John Driden, in the year 1666; and that this picture was brought by her from Canons-Ashby at the time of her marriage, and has been in Mr. Sneyd's family ever since."—That there is a portrait of Dryden at Kiel-Hall is very probable; but if it was brought from Canons-Ashby in 1666, it unquestionably was not painted by Kneller, who came into England in 1674.—It is not likely that Sir Robert Driden, the brother of Frances, should have been possessed of a portrait of the poet. If the picture at Kiel-Hall be Kneller's, it was probably painted at a much later period, and given to Mrs. Frances Sneyd by her brother, John Driden, of Chesterton.

There is another original portrait of Dryden at Bilton, near Rugby, in Warwickshire, which belonged to Addison, and, together with a large estate, was possessed by his only child, Mrs. Charlotte Addison, for near seventy years;

A very erroneous notion has prevailed concerning Dryden's want of property, and *uniform* distress

who in that long period, though extremely affluent, did not erect any memorial to her father in Westminster-Abbey, where he was buried, and yet remains without a tomb. This portrait, on her death in March, 1797, with the estate of Bilton, became the property of the Hon. John Bridgeman Simpson, second son of Lord Bradford.

A crayons drawing of Dryden, which long remained in the mansion-house of Sir Gilbert Pickering, Bart. at Tichmarsh, was purchased about twenty years ago, when all the furniture of that house was sold. This drawing, which appears to have been made when he was about fifty, was esteemed by the Pickering family a very strong likeness. It is now in the possession of William Walcot, Jun. of Oundle, Esq. The initial letters of the artist's name by whom it was done, are, J. P.

The late Horace, Earl of Orford, was possessed of a small whole-length portrait of our author, sitting, by Maubert, who died in 1746, and is said to have painted Wycherley, Congreve, and Pope, from the life. A duplicate of this portrait is in the possession of Charles Bedford, of Brixton Causeway, Esq. It is extraordinary, that Lord Orford (Description of Strawberry-Hill, p. 7.) should have supposed that his mother was *great niece* to Dryden. The truth is, his maternal grandmother, Elizabeth Philipps, the wife of John Shorter, Esq., was second cousin to the poet's *sons*. Dryden's great grandson and Lord Orford would have been fourth cousins. The origin of his error was, the supposing Elizabeth Dryden, the wife of Sir Richard Philipps, to have been *sister*, when in fact she was *aunt*, to the poet.

A head of Dryden drawn by Fab. Steele, (I know not whether an original or a copy,) was formerly in the possession of the Rev. Mr. Bilston, Chaplain of All-Souls

throughout his life. "He is reported (says Dr. Johnson,) by his last biographer, Derrick, to have

College, in Oxford, (M. A. in 1723,) and now belongs to the Rev. Mr. Cruttwell, author of a work entitled "The Concordance of Parallels," intended to serve as a Concordance to the Bible in any language. An engraving from a copy of this head was given in THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE for 1791; vol. lxi. p. 321.

All the prints of our author, not here mentioned, are, I believe, copies of some or other of the engraved portraits above enumerated.

¹ In "Epigrams on the Paintings of the most eminent Masters," by J. E. [John Elsum] Esq. 8vo. 1700, I find the following lines:

"The Effigies of Mr. DRYDEN, by Closterman.

Epig. CLXIV.

"A sleepy eye he shews, and no sweet feature,
 "Yet was indeed a favourite of nature:
 "Endow'd and graced with an exalted mind,
 "With store of wit, and that, of every kind.
 "Juvenal's tartness, Horace's sweet air,
 "With Virgil's force, in him concenter'd were.
 "But though the painter's art can never shew it,
 "That his exemplar was so great a poet,
 "Yet are the lines and tints so subtly wrought,
 "You may perceive he was a man of thought.
 "Closterman, 'tis confess'd, has drawn him well,
 "But short of ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL."

In a note on the word *feature*, in the first of these verses, which the writer is pleased to call an Epigram, he observes that "*feature* is but a stroke or part of the countenance, but is here by synecdoche used for *the whole*."

Another particularity of his countenance was, a large mole on his right cheek, which all his portraits exhibit.

inherited from his father an estate of two hundred a year. Such a fortune ought to have secured him from that poverty which seems *always* to have oppressed him ; or, if he had wasted it, to have made him ashamed of publishing his necessities. But though he had many enemies, who undoubtedly examined his life with a scrutiny sufficiently malicious, I do not remember that he was ever charged with waste of his patrimony." Dr. Johnson therefore rightly concluded, that Derrick's account was erroneous. In another place, considering the same subject, he observes, that " the persecution of criticks was not the worst of his vexations ; he was much more disturbed by the importunities of want. His complaints of poverty are so frequently repeated, either with the dejection of weakness, sinking in helpless misery, or the indignation of merit claiming its tribute from mankind, that it is impossible not to detest the age which could impose on such a man the necessity of such solicitations, or not to despise the man who could submit to such solicitations without necessity."

Dryden certainly did not submit to these solicitations without necessity ; and the age, or rather the Ministers of King William the Third do deserve to be detested for their neglect of so great a poet : yet it is not true that he was always conflicting with want ; nor is the representation just, which ascribes to the whole period of his life that distress, which clouded only a part of it ; and

accounts for the imperfection of his plays by attributing their defects to the unceasing indigence of their author.¹

¹ In a letter from Swift to Mr. Thomas Beach, merchant in Denbighshire, dated Dublin, April 11, 1735, (printed by Nichols, in his Supplement to Swift's Works, vol. ii. p. 458,) is the following passage:

"I read your poem several times, and shewed it to three or four judicious friends, who all approved of it, but agreed with me, that it wanted some corrections. Upon which I took the number of lines, which are in all 299, the odd number being occasioned by what they call a triplet; which was a vicious way of rhyming, wherewith Mr. Dryden abounded, and was imitated by all the bad versifiers in Charles the Second's reign. Dryden, though my near relation, is one I have often blamed, as well as pitied. He was poor, and in great haste to finish his plays, *because by them he chiefly supported his family, and this made him so very incorrect*; he likewise brought in the Alexandrine verse at the end of his triplets. I was so angry at these corruptions, that, above twenty-four years ago, I banished them all by one triplet with the Alexandrine, upon a very ridiculous subject [*A City Shower*]. I absolutely did prevail with Mr. Pope and Gay, and Dr. Young, and one or two more, to reject them. Mr. Pope never used them till he translated Homer, which was too long a work to be so very exact in; and I think in one or two of his last poems, he hath, out of laziness, done the same thing, though very seldom.—I now proceed to what I would have corrected in your poem."

If our author, from the year 1668 to 1689, during which period he produced above two-thirds of his dramatick compositions, independently of any emoluments derived from the theatre was possessed of a revenue of

Under his father's will, which has been already mentioned,⁴ in 1654, when he was in his twenty-third year, he became possessed of two-thirds of a small landed estate in Northamptonshire, near a village called Blakesley,⁵ about three miles

at least three hundred pounds a year, (as I shall shew he was,) which may be estimated equal to nine hundred a year now, the defects of his plays, whatever they may be, cannot justly be ascribed to his poverty.

⁴ See p. 21.

⁵ The devise to our poet and his mother, in his father's will, runs thus :

"I give my sonne, John, two partes of my land in Blakesley. I give my wife one third parte of Blakesley, during her life naturall, to receive the rent thereof quarterly." Our poet is not mentioned in any other part of this will.

This estate, on the failure of Dryden's issue, having devolved to his brother Erasmus, descended to his grandson, Sir John Dryden ; and, under his will, is now the property of Lady Dryden, with remainder to her eldest son, Sir Edward Turner Dryden, Bart. It consists, as Lady Dryden has informed me, of one hundred and eighty-six acres of land, and is now let for £.182. 12s. 0d. a year. Being a very cold soil, timber trees and hedges thrive ill there ; and it is chiefly valuable for agriculture.

From an epitaph on Mr. William Watts, who died June 16, 1614, preserved in Bridges's History of Northamptonshire, vol. i. p. 233, it appears, that it was in the last age called BLAXLEY, as the name of our great dramatick poet, in like manner, was unquestionably pronounced *Shaxpeare*. Browne Willis, the antiquary, who was a friend of Sir John Dryden's, and was often a visitor at Canons-Ashby, said, that it was originally called *Black-Obsely*, from the river *Ooze* taking its rise there.

distant from Canons-Ashby and four from Towcester; consisting of one hundred and eighty-six acres, which were then part of a common field or unenclosed land, and were let for sixty pounds a year :⁶ the other third part of this estate was devised to his mother during her life. At his first outset in London, therefore, he began the world with a revenue of forty pounds a year; an income which, the value of money and the modes of life being jointly considered, may be fairly estimated as equal to one hundred and twenty pounds a year at this day. While therefore he remained a single man, though not affluent, he certainly was

⁶ The precise rent of the estate of Blakesley, in our author's time, is ascertained by the extracts from the account-books of his brother, Sir Erasmus Dryden, already given, and by the following entry in the year 1712 :

" September y^e 29th, 1712. Allowed to my sonn Mr. Edward Dryden, upon my *Laday Dryden's* accompt, being for *thirds*, tenn pounds, for halfe a yeare, from Laday-day, 1712, to Michaelmas, 1712.—This accompt of Laday Dryden's is made up to Michaelmas, 1712, all receipts in Mr. Shaw's name."—John Shaw, Esq., the person here meant, was Clerk of the Poultry in the King's kitchen, a department of the Board of Green Cloth. He was married to Sir Erasmus Dryden's daughter, Mary; and appears to have received Lady Elizabeth Dryden's dower, and to have paid it, for her use, to Mrs. Stoker, her attendant.

The number of acres in the poet's Northamptonshire estate being 186, and the rent sixty pounds *per annum*, the land, it appears, was let at somewhat under six shillings and sixpence an acre.

not in want. On his marriage with Lady Elizabeth Howard in 1664 or 1665,* her father, the Earl of Berkshire, I believe, settled upon them a small estate in Wiltshire, the exact value of which I have not been able to ascertain; but it probably was not less than sixty pounds a year.' From 1665 till 1670, we may therefore consider him as possessed of one hundred pounds a year in land;

* It being probable that our author was married either in London or at Charlton, the seat of his father-in-law, in Wiltshire; there was reason to believe that a license was taken out in one or other of those places, from which the time of his marriage, and the age of his wife, might have been ascertained: but neither in the Faculty-Office in London, nor the Consistory-Office at Salisbury, the records of both which offices have been examined with this view, is there any trace of such a license having been granted.

† The only notice of Dryden's Wiltshire estate that I have met with, is found in the following passage of his Dedication of *CLZOMENES*, in 1692, to Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester:

"I not only give you back a play, which, had you not redeemed it, had not been mine, but also at the same time dedicate to you the unworthy author, with my inviolable faith, and, how mean soever, my utmost service; and I shall be proud to hold my dependence on you *in chief*, as *I do part of my small fortune, in Wiltshire.*"

Whether this estate was freehold, or copyhold, or what was its extent or value, I have in vain endeavoured to ascertain. The Duke of Queensberry, to whom I had conceived that some part of Lord Cornbury's estate had devolved, (who was the last male descendant of Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester,) obligingly ordered his family

and his emoluments from the playhouse during that period (with the exception of about eighteen

deeds to be examined, with a view to discover the nature of the tenure alluded to by our author ; but no trace of it was found. I now believe that Lord Rochester's estate is possessed by the Earl of Clarendon.—Dryden's Wiltshire property, on the death of his widow, who survived all her children, probably under her marriage settlement went to her own right heirs.

My conjecture, however, concerning the value of this estate, is not without a reasonable foundation. As Dryden did not derive any property in Wiltshire from his father, the land in question doubtless was the principal part of his wife's fortune ; and was assured to him by Thomas, Earl of Berkshire, who possessed an estate at Charlton, in the county of Wilts, derived, I believe, from his mother, Elizabeth, daughter and coheir of Sir Henry Knevet, of Charlton, Knight. His family was so numerous, (for beside the eleven children enumerated in p. 398, he had at least two others, James, and our poet's wife,) that probably for many of them he could make but a moderate provision. However, he would hardly settle on his daughter Elizabeth less than her husband possessed ; and as land at the time of the Restoration was sold for about twenty years' purchase, her portion, if my supposition be well founded ; was only equal to a sum of twelve hundred pounds.

Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas knew enough of the value of truth, to mix a *little* of it with her fictions, and in this instance probably did not exercise her invention. She asserts, that Lady Elizabeth Dryden, after her husband's death, took a small house in Sherrard-street, and that " she had wherewithal to live frugally genteel ;" which, according to her account, was eighty pounds a year. If

months, when the theatres were shut,) may be estimated at a hundred pounds a year: which, with his patrimony and his wife's fortune, produced an income equal to six hundred a year at the present time. In August, 1670, he obtained the offices of Poet Laureat and Historiographer, with a salary of two hundred pounds a year, and a sum of £.400., which, by a retrospective clause in his Patent, he was intitled to receive immediately; and by his contract with the comedians of the

this statement be correct, the Wiltshire property was let for sixty pounds a year, and the whole of it was by her marriage settlement secured to her for life; for from the Northamptonshire estate, we have seen, she derived but twenty pounds a year.

Mr. Spence furnishes a better authority than this lady for the statement I have made; for he mentions in his *ANECDOTES*, that Pope, speaking of Dryden, (probably from the information of either Congreve or Garth,) said, that "his family estate was about £.120. a year." He added, indeed, that Dryden left it to his son, Charles; but this was a mistake, for our author made no will; and as Charles died in his mother's life-time, he had never more than forty pounds a year to live on.

Congreve himself only says, in general terms, that Dryden's "hereditary income was little more than a bare competency." But Oldys, who was a careful inquirer, and began his inquiries above seventy years ago, mentions in one of his Manuscripts, that he had been informed by one of Dryden's relations, that he had *about* £.100. a year to the last; which appears to have been not very far from the truth.

King's Theatre, which commenced before he obtained the laurel, and continued for about ten years, he derived from the stage during the greater part of that time not less than two hundred pounds^a

^a By this contract, which has been printed in a former page, (p. 73.) he was entitled to a share and a quarter of the clear profits of the King's Theatre; which, according to the statement of the players, for several years produced between three and four hundred pounds a year, *communibus annis*. But there is good ground for believing that they exaggerated his profits. However, they may moderately be estimated at two hundred a year; for from an indenture between Thomas Killigrew on the one part, and Thomas Ellyott, Esq., and Dame Catharine Sayer, on the other, executed June 27, 1670, (an abstract of which is now before me,) it appears, that Thomas Killigrew, out of the *two shares* which he possessed in the King's Theatre, (the whole of the profits of acting being divided according to this deed into twelve shares, and not twelve and three quarters, as recited in a former deed between Thomas and Henry Killigrew, Thomas Porter, and Sir John Sayer and his wife,) had settled *two hundred* pounds a year on Henry, his eldest son by his first wife. And the object of this deed of June 27, 1670, was, out of the remaining profits of the said two shares to make a provision for his second wife Charlotte, and for his son Charles, and the other children which he then had or might have by her.—We cannot suppose that Thomas Killigrew gave his son, Henry, more than he retained for himself; and consequently his two shares must have produced at least four hundred pounds a year. My estimate, however, is still lower; for I have supposed a share to produce but £.160. a year. According to a statement by Sir

cession to his fortune by he
bequeathed to her by her hu
which we have seen produ
year ; to which she added,
affection, a silver tankard, ar

Henry Herbert, Master of the
Charles I. and Charles II. made
Killigrew then derived from his
per week ; which, supposing the
forty weeks in the year, would pr
But many of Sir Henry Herbert's
referred to, appear to have been ex
♦ Register of the parish of Tiel
The Will of our author's n
which is in the Prerogative-Office
date, but was proved, June 12, 16
" In the name of God, Amen.
" county of Northton, widdow,
" this my last will and testameint in
" I comend my soule into the har

From 1676, however, to 1685, his emoluments from the theatre ought not to be estimated com-

" As touching my body, I leave it to be buried [by my]
 " executors, soe to rest till the time of my changing shall
 " come, in that great appearing of my Lord and Saviour,
 " with all his Saints. . And touching the disposing of my
 " goods and money, I give and bequeathe to my beloved
 " sonne, JOHN DRYDEN, a silver tankerd, marked with
 " J. D. and a goold ring, which was my wedding-ring.
 " And it is my will, that after the decease of my deare
 " son, John Dryden, that his eldest sonne, Charles Dry-
 " den, should have the ring, as a guift from his grand-
 " mother M. D.

Some of her bequests mark the modes of life at that time, when a service of pewter was esteemed an elegance. To her " daughter Lawton" she gives the black-wrought bed with the furniture belonging to it; "all the new Turkey worke chairs and wrought cradle-cloth; a high silver bowle, a little silver porringer, a crooked spoon, a red curtaine that hung in her chamber-window; two ewes and lambs; *two of the best pewter dishes, that had her husband's arms on them, and two of the new pewter plates.*"

To her daughters, Frances and Elizabeth, whom she made her executors, she bequeathed twenty pounds a piece. She mentions a married daughter, to whom, by the name of her " daughter Blunke," she bequeathed a ring of ten shillings value; who, I suspect, lived at Bletso, in Northamptonshire, and has been erroneously called *Bletso* by Collins. Her last bequest, which is to her " deare grand-daughter, Mary Dryden," probably did not greatly gratify the young lady. It was—JOSEPHUS. She afterwards became the wife of John Shaw, Esq.

The will of Elizabeth, Countess Dowager of Exeter, who was maternal grand-mother to Lady Elizabeth Dry-

manibus annis, at more than £.100. a year; and consequently during that time, even with this

den, contains a bequest to her, of more value than the wedding-ring and tankard, bequeathed to our poet by his mother :

“ *Item*, I give to my grandchild, Lady Elizabeth Howard, the pearle necklace and the pendent pearle hanging at it, which I did but lend her. And I give her my ague-ring pendent, and a bracelett of pearle and gould I used to weare on my arme.”—The office transcript of this will (PRE. OFF. Alchin, qu. 356,) is here perfectly unintelligible; for instead of my *ague-ring*, (a charm for the ague,) it has—“ my *aquer-ing* pendent;” but on consulting an attested copy of the original will, (for the original itself is not in the office,) the true word was found, which my friend Mr. Bindley’s sagacity had previously discovered.—These trinkets our poet’s wife, probably, at a subsequent period would have gladly exchanged for something more substantial.

By a deed made on the 9th of August, 1650, which is recited and confirmed in this will, the testatrix had granted to trustees forty-nine acres of land, and several houses near Newark, in the county of Nottingham, held by lease for three lives, and all the tythes, lands, tenements, and hereditaments, parcel of the possessions of St. Leonard’s Hospital, near or without Newark; in trust for herself for life,—remainder to the uses of her will,—remainder to her daughter, the Countess of Berkshire, for life,—remainder to that lady’s *third* daughter, Lady Elizabeth Howard, her executors and assigns. I know not whether any of the lives on which the term depended, were in being in 1671, when Lady Berkshire died, so as to entitle Lady Elizabeth Dryden to any advantage under this grant, supposing there were sufficient funds, independent of this leasehold interest, and the tythes, &c. of St. Leonard’s

accession, his income was only £.420. a year, which may be rated as equivalent to £.1,200. *per annum*, at this day. From 1685 to 1689, he derived nothing from the stage ; but his salary was increased to £.300. a year ; which, with his private fortune, made his income still the same. But, in August, 1689, his distress truly began ; for being then deprived of both his places, his certain revenue was reduced to £.120. a year, with such contingent accessions as were derived from his literary exertions, or the kindness and liberality of his friends and patrons.

It has been a received opinion, grounded on a statement made not long after his death by Prior, that when the Earl of Dorset, in 1689, " was obliged to take from Dryden the King's pension, he gave him an equivalent out of his own estate."^a But if by an equivalent were meant (and such seems to have been the meaning,) an annuity for life, equal to his salary, Prior unquestionably was misin-

hospital, to discharge all the debts and legacies of the testatrix.—When this deed was made, Lady Elizabeth Howard was the third *surviving* daughter of her parents ; her elder sister, Diana, who was born in 1631, being then dead.

Neither Langbaine, nor Gildon, seems to have known who James Howard, the author of two successful plays, was. It appears from Lady Exeter's will, which was made March 20, 1650-51, and proved, April 12, 1654, that he was her grandson, and brother to Lady Elizabeth. He was the youngest son of Thomas, Earl of Berkshire.

^a Dedication of Prior's Poems to Lionel, Earl of Dorset, 8vo. 1709.

formed, or stated this matter carelessly and inaccurately, confiding perhaps in his memory, which deceived him; for Dryden himself, speaking of his patron's munificence at that period, mentions it in such a manner as proves, beyond a doubt, that Dorset's bounty did not supply him with any stated and certain income, but was merely temporary and occasional. "Being (says he, in his Discourse on Satire, addressed to that nobleman in August, 1692,) encouraged only with fair words by King Charles the Second, my little salary ill paid, and no prospect of a future subsistence, I was then discouraged in the beginning of my attempt: and now age has overtaken me; and want, a more insufferable evil, through the change of the times, has wholly disabled me. Though I must ever acknowledge, to the honour of your Lordship, and the eternal memory of your charity, that since this Revolution, wherein I have patiently suffered the ruin of my small fortune, and the loss of that poor subsistence which I had from two Kings, whom I had served more faithfully than profitably to myself,—then your Lordship was pleased, out of no other motive but your own nobleness, without any desert of mine, or the least solicitation from me, to make me **A MOST BOUNTIFUL PRESENT**; which at that time, when I was most in want of it, came most seasonably and unexpectedly to my relief. That favour, my Lord, is of itself sufficient to bind any grateful man to a perpetual acknowledgment, and to all the future service which one

of my mean condition can be ever able to perform." Five years afterwards we find him addressing Sheffield, Marquis of Normanby, in the same strain. "Will you give me leave to acquaint the world, that I have many times been obliged to your bounty since the Revolution. Though I never was reduced to beg a charity, nor ever had the impudence to ask one, either of your Lordship, or your noble kinsman, the Earl of Dorset, much less of any other; yet *when I least expected it*, you have *both* remembered me: so inherent it is in your family, not to forget an old servant. It looks rather like ingratitude on my part, that where I have been so *often* obliged, I have appeared so seldom, to return my thanks; and where I was also so sure of being well received. Somewhat of laziness was in the case, and somewhat too of modesty; but nothing of disrespect or of unthankfulness."— Both these passages plainly denote occasional acts of munificence, and are entirely inconsistent with Prior's statement. He who received a certain annual income from the liberality of his patron, would surely not have thanked him for a bountiful present; nor have alluded to *frequent* obligations, which imply intermission, and something of casualty, if those obligations had been of such a kind as *must* have recurred during every remaining year of his life.

Of this nobleman's occasional bounty to Dryden, the following instance is recorded by Jacob. "Towards the latter part of his life, (the person

spoken of is Tom Brown,) I am informed, he was in favour with the Earl of Dorset; who invited him to dinner on a Christmas-day, with Mr. Dryden and some other gentlemen famous for learning and ingenuity (according to his lordship's custom); when Mr. Brown, to his agreeable surprise, found a bank-note of £.50. under his plate, and Mr. Dryden at the same time was presented with another of £.100."^a Lord Dorset, it is well known, delighted in such acts of munificence, and this mode of dispensing pecuniary favours was not uncommon in the last age:^b but it is somewhat extraordinary, that he should have brought together two persons who could have had so little

^a Historical Account of the most considerable English Poets, 8vo. 1720, p. 16.—It appears from one of our author's letters, that he had received a visit from Lord Dorset, and had dined with him, early in Nov. 1699.

^b In Sir Bulstrode Whitelocke's Account of the splendid Masque given by the four Inns of Court, Feb. 2, 1633-4, which cost twenty thousand pounds, (a manuscript formerly in the possession of the late Dr. Moreton of the British Museum, and quoted by Dr. Burney, *HIST. OF MUSICK*, iii. 376,) speaking of the musicians, he says, "For the musicke, which was particularly committed to my charge, I gave to Mr. Ives and to Mr. Lawes 100*l.* a peece for their rewards. For the four French gentlemen, the Queen's servants, I thought that a *handsome and liberall* gratifying of them would be made known to the Queen, their mistris, and be well taken by her. I therefore invited them one morning to a *collation* at St. Dunstan's taverne, in the great room, the Oracle of Apollo, where each of them

cordiality towards each other, as Brown and our author.⁴ Dryden, however, must have been flattered by the great difference between the two donations; and he appears to have entertained no ill-will towards Brown, speaking of him in one of his letters with perfect unconcern, as a mere pamphleteer, who wrote against him solely for the purpose of getting a little money.

From the month of August, 1689, to the time of his death, a period of near eleven years, we must, it appears, consider Dryden possessed of no other income but that which was derived from his own small estate, aided by the occasional bounty of his noble friends, and his own literary exertions. In this period he brought out five plays, the profits of which amounted probably to five hundred pounds: the author's third night¹ producing

had his plate layd by him, covered, and the napkin by it; and when they opened their plates, they found in each of them forty pieces of gould, of their master's coyne, for the first dish; and they had cause to be much pleased with this surprisall."

⁴ We can hardly suppose that Lord Dorset was induced to invite Brown to his table, by the following lines in "The [*pretended*] Petition of Tho. Brown to the Lords of the Council," written some years before:

"Then pardon Tom Brown,

"And let him write on;

"But if you had rather convert the poor sinner,

"*His foul railing mouth may be stopp'd with a dinner.*"

¹ When the house was quite full, an author gained somewhat more; for at this time the theatre in Drury-

usually about seventy pounds, and the play itself being sold to the bookseller for thirty guineas.*

Lane held such a number of persons as produced a hundred and thirty pounds (the price of admission to the boxes being half a crown; see Dryden's Prologue to *THE MISTAKES*, 1690); and the nightly charges of the house, as they are called, did not exceed thirty pounds. In 1709 the charges were £.40. In 1750 they were £.60.; and at present they are £.200.

Southerne is supposed to have been the first dramatick author, who had two benefits, on the production of a new play. In the Dedication of *SIR ANTONY LOVE*, a comedy, in 1691, he speaks of his being interested in the *third* and *sixth* representation of that piece. The custom, however, does not appear to have been immediately established, for in 1696 the author of *THE TREACHEROUS BROTHERS* should seem, from his Epilogue, to have had only one benefit:

"See't but three days, and fill the house *the last*,

"He shall not trouble you again in haste."

Yet in the very next year in the Prologue to *BOADICEA*, the *sixth* night is mentioned, as belonging to the poet as well as the third.

Whether, however, Dryden had the advantage of two representations of his *ARTHUR*, *CLEOMENES*, and *LOVE TRIUMPHANT*, or not, (for *DON SEBASTIAN* and *AMPHITRYON* preceded this regulation,) his profits should seem not to have exceeded the sum mentioned in the text; for in a letter to his son in 1697, he mentions that he was employed on a play called *THE CONQUEST OF CHINA BY THE TARTARS*, which had been put into his hands by the author, Sir Robert Howard. "It will cost me," he adds, "six weeks study, with the probable be-

Nothing, perhaps, more strongly shews the great fertility of his mind, than his having written near one hundred Prologues and Epilogues, for the most part of extraordinary excellence; having never been assisted by a friend with this kind of decoration to any of his own plays, except in two instances; and having supplied the contemporary

need of *an hundred pounds*." Perhaps indeed, he here meant only to speak of the theatrical profits, exclusive of the copy-money. In the Preface to *CLEOMENES*, however, he says, "the reward I have from the stage is so little, that it is not worth my labour."

* The following receipt is copied from the original, which was found among Mr. Tonson's papers:

"Oct. 7th 1691.

"Receiv'd the sum of Thirty Guineys, for which I resigne to Mr. Tonson all my right in the printing y^e copy of *CLEOMENES*, a tragedy.

"Witnesse my hand,

"Witnesse,

"JOHN DRYDEN."

"John Dryden, Jun."

Pope does not seem to have known that Dryden had ever received so much money for the copy of a play; for speaking of him to Mr. Spence, (as that gentleman has mentioned in his *ANECDOTES*,) he said, "For some time he wrote a play at least every year; but in *those days* ten broad pieces was the usual highest price for a play, and if they got £.50. more in the acting, 'twas reckoned very well."—This, perhaps, was the case in part of the time of Charles the Second; but afterwards, we see a larger sum was given; and in the middle of the reign of Queen Anne the common price of the copy-right of a play was fifty pounds.

dramatists with above forty pieces, of this difficult species of composition. His price for a Prologue or Epilogue is said by Dr. Warburton to have been originally four guineas; till being asked by Southerne to write one, he required six; "Not, (said he,) young man, out of disrespect to you, but the players have had my goods too cheap." This story, Warburton says,⁷ was told by Southerne to him and Pope, nearly at the same time. In the Life of Southerne, however, published shortly afterwards by Shiels and the younger Cibber, on the testimony of a gentleman who had been personally acquainted with that poet, the sums are said to have been *five* and *ten* guineas; and Dr. Johnson with more probability supposes, that Dryden's original price for a Prologue was *two* guineas, and that from Southerne he demanded *three*: so difficult is it to elicit truth from any traditional tale.

By his translation of Virgil he got at the least twelve hundred pounds.⁸ Of his other works it is not easy to ascertain the price; but from the letters which passed between him and his bookseller, it may be collected, that he usually received fifty guineas for about fifteen hundred lines.

⁷ In a note (first published in 1751,) on Popes's lines on Southerne's birth-day, 1742:

"May Tom, whom heaven sent down to raise

"The price of Prologues and of Plays," &c.

⁸ See p. 237.

Tonson, who seems to have considered the making of verses as much a manufacture as the making of paper,

Each word and syllable brought to the scale,
And valued to a scruple in the sale;

for on one occasion we find him complaining bitterly, that he had not enough for his money. "If (says he,) the matter of fact as I state it be true, (and upon my word what I mention I can shew you in your letter,) then pray, Sir, consider, how much dearer I pay than you offered it to the other bookseller; for he might have had to the end of the story of Daphnis [Daphne] for twenty guineas, which is, in your translation, 759 lines; and then suppose twenty guineas more for the same number, (759 lines,) that makes for forty guineas 1518 lines; and all that I have for fifty guineas are but 1446: so that, if I have no more, I pay ten guineas above forty, and have *seventy-two* lines less for fifty, in proportion, than the other bookseller should have had for forty."!—Degrading as it may appear to our author, we must therefore now estimate his works, not by their value, but their bulk. At the rate already mentioned, his translation of Juvenal and Persius, to which he contributed about 3500 verses, would not have produced more than £.125.; but in consideration of the excellence of the original, as well as the translation, and that the latter was not a detached but an entire work, a hundred and fifty pounds may perhaps be estimated

...the version
book of Tacitus,
other productions,
To these several su
15. 0., we may add
and pounds, derive
cence of Lord Dorse
the Duchess of Orm
of Chesterton, whose
Epistle addressed to
month before his dea
former period he also a
has come to my hands
sheets were printed.
supposing these statem
nual income from all t
private estate, even du
of eleven years, was a
Yet his complaints were
let it be remembered, th
grown to man's estate

obtained by unceasing toil, rendered still more irksome by age and infirmities. "This is a business," (says he, in a letter to Tonson, in 1697,) of the greatest consequence in the world; for you know how I love Charles; and therefore I write to you with all the earnestness of a father. - - *If I must die of over-study*, I cannot spend my life better than in saving his."—Nor was the constant labour by which these sums were acquired, his only grievance: the greater part of his income being occasional and casual, was no small evil, and he must have experienced much embarrassment from the uncertainty of his revenue; in affluence perhaps for half the year, and during the other half often without a guinea. Instead of suffering him to earn a precarious and uncertain livelihood by laborious and incessant literary exertions, it surely would have been more noble in the ministers of King William to have settled on him a pension equal in value to the salary of the offices which he had conscientiously relinquished; overlooking his former satires, and his present political and religious attachments, which latter, if at all attended to, entitled him to respect; and considering him only as one of the greatest poets which England had produced in many centuries; who, on that ground alone, at such an advanced period of life, had an indisputable claim to ease and independence. William, however, was no patron of poets; and Dryden received no

“ King William (says Lord Orford,) had so little leisure to attend to, or so little disposition to, men of wit,

favour whatsoever either from the prince on the throne, or those to whom the dispensation of the royal bounty was entrusted : and while he was thus neglected, he had the mortification to see the infamous and perjured Titus Oates countenanced by the Court, and rewarded with a pension of three hundred pounds a year, which he enjoyed to the time of his death. ' .

During this calamitous season of his life, it should be remembered to his honour, that his spirit was unbroken ; and however he may have complained of distress and embarrassments, no regard to his interest could induce him to abandon his religious or political opinions ; as is evinced by a paper written but six months before his death, in which he speaks of his situation and prospects with great dignity and fortitude. " What has hindered me from writing to you, (says he, in a letter to a kinswoman,) was neither ill health, nor a worse thing, ingratitude ; but a flood of little businesses, which yet are necessary to my subsistence, and of which I hoped to have given you a good account before this time : but the Court rather speaks kindly of me, than does any thing for me, though they promise largely ; and perhaps they think, I will advance as they go backward ; in

that when St. Evremont was introduced to him, the King said coldly, " I think you were a Major-General in the French service." ANECDOTES OF PAINTING, iii. 113.

' This detestable miscreant died in 1705 ; so that he received near five thousand pounds from the Exchequer.

which they will be much deceived, for I can never go an inch beyond my conscience and honour. If they will consider me as a man who has done my best to improve the language, and especially the poetry,—and will be content with my acquiescence under the present Government, and forbearing satire on it, that I can promise, because I can perform it; but I can neither take the oaths, nor forsake my religion.”^a

Of Dryden's personal qualities and domestick manners, Congreve, who, during the last ten years of his life had lived in great familiarity with him, has left so minute an account, that however often transcribed, it must always make a part of this great poet's history. “He was,” says Congreve, “of a nature exceedingly humane and compassionate; easily forgiving injuries, and capable of a prompt and sincere reconciliation with them who had offended him. Such a temperament is the only solid foundation of all moral virtues, and sociable endowments. His friendship, where he professed it, went much beyond his professions; and I have been told of strong and generous instances of it, by the persons themselves who received them; though his hereditary income was little more than a bare competency.

“As his reading had been very extensive, so was he very happy in a memory tenacious of every thing that he had read. He was not more pos-

^a Letter to Mrs. Steward, Nov. 7, 1699.

essed of knowledge, than he was communicative of it; but then his communication was by no means pedantick, or imposed upon the conversation; but just such, and went so far as, by the natural turns of the discourse in which he was engaged, it was necessarily promoted or required. He was extreme ready and gentle in his correction of the errors of any writer, who thought fit to consult him; and full as ready and patient to admit of the reprehension of others, in respect of his own oversights or mistakes. He was of very easy, I may say, of very pleasing access: but something slow, and, as it were, diffident, in his advances to others. He had something in his nature that abhorred intrusion into any society whatsoever. Indeed it is to be regretted, that he was rather blameable in the other extreme: for by that means, he was personally less known, and consequently his character might become liable both to misapprehensions and misrepresentations.

“To the best of my knowledge and observation, he was, of all the men that I ever knew, one of the most modest, and the most easily to be discountenanced in his approaches either to his superiours or his equals.” - - -

¹ Congreve's censure of his compositions is as follows: —“As to his writings, I shall not take upon me to speak of them; for to say little of them, would not be to do them right; and to say all that I ought to say, would be, to be very voluminous. But I may venture to say in general terms, that no man hath written in our language so much, and so various matter, and in so various man-

"To this account," Dr. Johnson observes, "nothing can be objected but the fondness of friends, so well. Another thing I may say very peculiar to him, which is, that his parts did not decline with his years, but that he was an improving writer to his last, even to near seventy years of age; improving even in fire and imagination, as well as in judgment: witness—his Ode on St. Cecilia's Day, and his Fables, his latest performances.

"He was equally excellent in verse, and in prose. His prose had all the clearness imaginable, together with all the nobleness of expression; all the graces and ornaments proper and peculiar to it, without deviating into the language or diction of poetry. I make this observation, only to distinguish his style from that of many poetical writers, who, meaning to write harmoniously in prose, do in truth often write mere blank verse.

"I have heard him frequently own with pleasure, that if he had any talent for English prose, it was owing to his having often read the writings of the great Archbishop Tillotson.

"His versification and his numbers he could learn of no body; for he first possessed those talents in perfection in our tongue. And they who have best succeeded in them since his time, have been indebted to his example; and the more they have been able to imitate him, the better have they succeeded.

"As his style in prose is always specifically different from his style in poetry, so, on the other hand, in his poems, his diction is, wherever his subject requires it, so sublimely and so truly poetical, that its essence, like that of pure gold, cannot be destroyed. Take his verses, and divest them of their rhymes, disjoint them in their numbers, transpose their expressions, make what arrangement and disposition you please of his words, yet shall there eternally be poetry, and something which will be found in-

ship; and to have excited that fondness in such a mind, is no small degree of praise." But little deduction need be made from this eulogy, when we reflect that it is abundantly confirmed by many of Dryden's contemporaries. "I was not," says Pope,⁴ "so happy as to know him. *Virgilium tantum vidi*. Had I been born early enough, I must have known and loved him; for I have been assured, not only by yourself, but by Mr. Congreve and Sir William Turnbull, that his personal qualities were as amiable as his poetical, notwithstanding the many libellous misrepresentations of them;'

capable of being resolved into absolute prose: an incontestable characteristick of a truly poetical genius.

"I will say but one word more in general of his writings; which is, that what he has done in any one species, or distinct kind, would have been sufficient to have acquired him a great name. If he had written nothing but his Prefaces, or nothing but his Songs, or his Prologues, each of them would have intitled him to the preference and distinction of excelling in his kind."

⁴ Letter from Pope to Wycherley, dated Dec. 26, 1704. We learn from Dr. Warburton, that when he was very young, he prevailed with a friend to carry him to Will's Coffee-house, that he might see Dryden. Dr. Warton mentions, that Mr. Walter Harte informed him, "that Dryden gave Pope a shilling for translating, when he was a boy, the story of Pyramus and Thisbe." At the time of Dryden's death he was near twelve years old.

⁵ It is pleasing to reflect, that in the irreproachable tenour of their lives,—the society, friendship, and esteem of wise, and good, and respected men,—and the testimony such men will always delight to bear to their merits in their life-time, and by letters, and in other ways, to

against which the former of these gentlemen has told me he will one day vindicate him.⁶ I suppose, those injuries were begun by the violence of party; but 'tis no doubt they were continued by envy at his success and fame."⁷

transmit to posterity,—THE VIRTUOUS in every age are provided with an adamant shield against the envenomed shafts of CALUMNY; and that the miscreants who employ those instruments, to gratify their malice or to protect their crimes, however artfully they may contrive to elude the publick disgrace of legal chastisement, cannot escape, whenever they are known, the indignation and abhorrence of mankind.

⁶ He did so in 1717, in the Dedication of a new edition of Dryden's plays, in six volumes, 12mo. to Thomas Pelham, Duke of Newcastle; quoted in p. 461.

⁷ "The fact," says Dr. Warburton, "was just the reverse. One of the first satires against him was the Duke of Buckingham's REHEARSAL, and one of the last Montague's parody of THE HIND AND THE PANTHER."—But Pope's representation appears to me to be correct. THE REHEARSAL only professed to ridicule the extravagancies of the *dramatick poet*, and did not contain any libellous misrepresentation of the *man*. The scrutiny of his private life, and the calumnies by which his morals were blackened, and his person attempted to be ridiculed, were posterior to the publication of ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL, and were doubtless produced by the violence of party. Even several years after the Revolution his political adversaries would scarcely allow him any merit as a poet. Thus, we find, in a Session of the Poets, published in 1698, the following lines:

"A reverend griesly elder first appear'd,

"With solemn port through the divided herd;

Gildon asserts, that Rochester's description of Lord Dorset—

"The best good man, with the worst-natured muse,—
was equally applicable to Dryden; for "though
nothing could be more severe than his satire, yet
nothing was so easy and so affable as his temper
and conversation."⁸ Another of his contemporaries, who, though he lived to near the middle of the present century, had seen some of his plays performed in the time of Charles the Second, is equally lavish in his praise. "I remember (says this writer,) plain John Dryden, (before he paid his court with success to the great,) in one uniform clothing of Norwich druggot. I have eat tarts with him and Madam Reeve⁹ at the Mulberry Garden,¹ when our author advanced to a sword

"Whose lab'ring Muse did many years excel

"In ill inventing, and in stealing well,

"Till LOVE TRIUMPHANT did the cheat reveal." }

See also Rowe's verses, quoted below.

⁸ Miscellaneous Letters and Essays, 8vo. 1694.

⁹ Mrs. Anne Reeve, who, according to the common inaccuracy of the time, was called *Reeves*, is said to have been Dryden's mistress. She was the original performer of *Amaryllis*, in *THE REHEARSAL*. In *MARRIAGE A-LA-MODE* she performed the part of a lady's maid. At a subsequent period she retired into a convent.

¹ The Mulberry Garden comprehended, I believe, the ground on which the houses in Arlington-street now stand, and part of the Green Park. From Sir Charles Sidley's

and Chadreux wig.¹ Posterity is absolutely mistaken as to that great man: though forced to be a Satirist, he was the mildest creature breathing,

play, entitled *THE MULBERRY GARDEN*, which was published in 1668, it appears that the company assembled there in the evening; and that there were arbours in the garden, in which they were regaled with cheesecakes, syllabubs, and wine, sweetened with sugar. The ladies frequently went there in masks.—In this comedy, it is said, that he who wished to be considered a man of fashion, always drank wine and water at dinner, and a dish of *tea* afterwards. This now common beverage was not, however, even then confined to the higher circles, for it was drunk in coffee-houses soon after the Restoration. So, in *THE CHARACTER OF A COFFEE-HOUSE*, 4to. 1665:

“The Gallant he for *tea* doth call,

“The Usurer for nought at all.”

By Patent, 24 Car. II. [1672.] p. 10. n. 21, The King demised to Henry, Earl of Arlington, at a rent of twenty shillings *per annum*, that whole piece or parcel of ground called the Mulberry Garden, situated in the parish of St. Martin's in the Fields, together with eight houses, with their appurtenances, thereupon, for ninety-nine years from the feast of St. John the Baptist then last, if there should be no former lease of the premises to Walter Lord Aston or any other person, undetermined; and if there should be any such lease undetermined, then for ninety-nine years from the determination of such lease.—This ground probably about that time ceased to be a place of publick entertainment; and became part of the gardens belonging to Arlington-House. See p. 400, n. 4.

¹ This peruke was probably so called from the name of some Frenchman, by whom it was made: so, at a subse-

and the readiest to help the young and deserving. Though his comedies are horribly full of *double entendre*, yet 'twas owing to a false complaisance for a dissolute age. He was in company the modestest man that ever conversed." ¹

quent period, the *Valency* wig, and the *Denville*, derived their names from their respective makers. In the preface to *ALL FOR LOVE*, our author speaks of *Chedreux* Criticks, who wholly formed their judgment by the French poets.

¹ GENT. MAG. for 1745, p. 99.—The following account of some of the contemporary writers, who have been frequently mentioned in the foregoing pages, is subjoined by the same writer :

" Master Elkanah Settle, the City Poet, I knew well, with his short-cut band, and his satin cap. He ran away from Oxford with the players, at an Act, as Otway did the same year, 1674. [This is certainly a mistake. Settle became a member of Trinity College in 1665, and produced his *CAMBYSES* in 1666-7. Otway, who went to Christ Church in 1669, performed in *THE JEALOUS BRIDE-GROOM*, in 1671-2.]

" You'll be glad to know any trifling circumstance concerning Otway. His person was of the middle size, about five feet seven inches high, inclinable to fatness. He had a thoughtful speaking eye, and that was all. He gave himself up early to drinking; and, like the unhappy wits of that age, passed his days between rioting and fasting, ranting jollity and abject penitence, carousing one week with Lord Plymouth, and then starving a month in low company at an alehouse on Tower-hill.

" Poor Nat Lee (I cannot think of him without tears,) had great merit. In the poetick sense he had, at intervals, inspiration itself; but lived an outrageous boisterous life, like his brethren. He was a well-looking man, and had

To deduce an author's character from sentiments expressed in his writings, when they are at variance with the tenour and actions of his life, and to found an eulogy on such delusive ground, (a method which has sometimes been followed,) though it may please his zealous admirers, can afford no gratification to the lovers of truth. His works, however, may be safely appealed to, when they strongly enforce the practice of those virtues for which the writer, through life, was eminently distinguished. The pages of Dryden, therefore, may with confidence be produced, in confirmation of the concurrent testimony of his friends; and it will be found, that, like Shakspeare, he never omits any favourable opportunity to recommend that philanthropy and kindness to our fellow-creatures, which they have uniformly

a very becoming head of hair. A picture of him I never saw. He was so esteemed and beloved, that before his misfortune, we always called him—*honest Nat*, and afterwards—*poor Nat*.

"Shadwell in conversation was a brute.

"Many a cup of metheglin have I drank with little starch'd Jolnny Crown: we called him so, from the stiff unalterable primness of his long cravat."

The paper containing the foregoing characters, has been thought to be written by Southerne, who died about sixteen months afterwards, May 26, 1746; but it is signed with the letters W. G.; and some of the circumstances mentioned are inconsistent with that supposition; for Southerne, at the first performance of *MARRIAGE A-LA-MODE*, (1673,) was a schoolboy in Dublin; and instead of having *bid adieu to the Muses* sixty years before, (1685,) had then produced only two of his eleven plays.

ascribed to him. From the numerous persuasives of this kind which his writings exhibit, I select the following animated passage ; and others, perhaps equally apposite, might be produced. In an address to the second Duke of Ormond, written not long before his death, after having observed that armour, however useful in war, is laid aside in peace, not only because it is a garment too harsh and cumbersome, but “ also keeps off the embraces of : more humane life,” he adds, “ For this reason, my Lord, though you have courage in an heroical degree, yet I ascribe it to you but as your second attribute ; mercy, benevolence, and compassion, claim precedence, as they are first in the Divine Nature. An intrepid courage, which is inherent in your Grace, is at best but a holiday kind of virtue,—to be seldom exercised, and never but in cases of necessity ; affability, mildness, tenderness, and a word which I would fain bring back to its original signification of virtue, I mean—good-nature, are of daily use : they are the bread of mankind, and staff of life : neither sighs, nor tears, nor groans, nor curses of the vanquished, follow acts of compassion and of charity ; but a sincere pleasure and serenity of mind in him who performs an action of mercy, which cannot suffer the misfortunes of another without redress, lest they should bring a contagion along with them, and pollute the happiness which he enjoys.”⁴

⁴ So also in the Dedication of AMPHITRYON to Sir William Levison Gower :—“ All things of honour have

These sentiments unquestionably flowed from his heart, for we know they did not evaporate in words, but regulated the practice of his life ; of which not only the tenderness and warmth of his affections as a parent and a friend, but his good-nature and humanity in his general intercourse with mankind afford incontestable proofs. His little estate at Blakesley is at this day occupied by one Harriots, grandson of the tenant who held it in Dryden's time ; and he relates, that his grandfather was used to take great pleasure in talking of our poet. He was, he said, the easiest and the kindest landlord in the world, and never raised the rent during the whole time he possessed the estate.*

To the various notices concerning himself, which Dryden, like Montagne, has very liberally scattered in his writings, we are indebted for many traits of his character ; which are fully confirmed by the testimony of those with whom he lived.

at best somewhat of ostentation in them ; there is a pride of doing more than is expected from us, and more than others would have done : but to proceed in the same tract of goodness and protection, is, to shew that a man is actuated by a thorough principle : it carries somewhat of tenderness in it, which is humanity in a heroical degree : it is a kind of unmoveable good-nature ; a word which is commonly despised, because it is so seldom practised. But, after all, it is the most generous virtue, opposed to the most degenerate vice, which is that of ruggedness and harshness to our fellow-creatures."

* Communicated by Lady Dryden, the present owner of the Blakesley estate.

“ For my own part, (says he,) I never could shake off the rustick bashfulness which hangs upon my nature ; but, valuing myself as little as I am worth, have been afraid to render even the common duties of respect to those who are in power. The ceremonious visits which are generally paid on such occasions, are not my talent. They may be real even in courtiers ; but they appear with such a face of interest, that a modest man would think himself in danger of having his sincerity mistaken for his design. My congratulations keep their distance, and pass no further than my heart. There it is that I have all the joy imaginable, when I see true worth rewarded, and virtue uppermost in the world.”⁶

To the eulogy of Congreve, who, agreeably to this representation, has described him as the most modest man he ever knew, may be added that of Lord Lansdowne, in his vindication of his friend from the charge brought against him by Burnet ; who in his History, under the year 1669, has said, that the playhouses were at that time “ become nests of prostitution,” and that “ the stage was defiled beyond all example, Dryden, the great master of dramattick poesy, being a monster of immodesty and of impurity of all sorts.” All who knew him, replied Lord Lansdowne, can testify, this was not his character. “ He was so much a stranger

⁶ Dedication of *TROILUS AND CRESSIDA* to Robert, Earl of Sunderland, 1679.

to immodesty, that modesty in too great a degree was his failing. He hurt his fortune by it; he was sensible of it; he complained of it, and never could overcome it." So far from meriting such a character, he was the very reverse; "a man of regular life and sober conversation, as all his acquaintance can vouch."—The Bishop's youngest son, indeed, contended, that the *immodesty* censured by his father was not opposed to *modesty*, but to *chastness*; and that this expression, as well as the words—*impurity of all sorts*, "could only be meant of his dramatick poesy, of which alone the Bishop was speaking."⁸—However inapplicable

⁷ "A Letter to the Author of 'Reflexions Historical and Political,' [written by John Oldmixon,] occasioned by a Treatise in Vindication of General Monk, and Sir Richard Granville, &c. By the Right Hon. George Granville, Lord Lansdowne;" 4to. 1732, p. 5.—He was (adds the noble writer,) esteemed, courted, and admired, by all the great men of the age in which he lived, who would certainly not have received into friendship a monster, abandoned to all sorts of vice and impurity. His writings will do immortal honour to his name and country, and his poems last as long, if I may have leave to say it, as the Bishop's sermons, supposing them to be equally excellent in their kind."

⁸ Remarks upon the Right Hon. the Lord Lansdowne's Letter to the Author of "the Reflections Historical and Political;" as far as relates to Bishop Burnet. 4to. 1732, p. 26. [By Thomas Burnet, Esq. who had published the first volume of his father's History in 1724. He was afterwards (1741) made a Judge of the Common Pleas, and died in 1751.]

to the point in question Lord Lansdowne's reasoning may have been, his character of Dryden strongly confirms what Congreve and others have said on the same subject ; for which purpose chiefly it has been here introduced. As to the licentiousness of some of our author's comedies, of which almost every writer of the time, following the example of the Court,* was as guilty as Dryden, his best defence must ever be that which Dr. Johnson has made for him,—that “ he lived to repent, and to testify his repentance.” The younger Burnet's assertion, however, that the poet's moral character

* See our author's Epilogue to THE PILGRIM :

“ - But sure a banish'd Court, with lewdness fraught,
 “ The seeds of open vice, returning, brought :
 “ Thus lodg'd, as vice by great example thrives,
 “ It first debauch'd the daughters and the wives.
 “ London, a fruitful soil, yet never bore
 “ So plentiful a crop of horns before.
 “ The poets, who must live by Courts, or starve,
 “ Were proud so good a government to serve ;
 “ And mixing with buffoons and pimps profane,
 “ Tainted the stage for some small snip of gain ;
 “ For they, like harlots under bawds profess,
 “ Took all the ungodly pains, and got the least.
 “ Thus did the thriving malady prevail ;
 “ The Court its head, the Poets but the tail.
 “ The sin was of our native growth, 'tis true ;
 “ The scandal of the sin was wholly new :
 “ *Misses* there were, but modestly conceal'd ;
 “ *Whitchall* the naked Venus first reveal'd ;
 “ Who standing, as at Cyprus, in her shrine,
 “ The strumpet was adored with rites divine.”

in private life was here not in contemplation, and that he was censured *only* as a dramattick poet, may justly be questioned; for in that case, his father should have written, "the *plays* of Dryden, the great master of dramattick pocsy, abounding in immodesty and impurities of all sorts:" and the Bishop's own words elsewhere may also be urged in favour of a larger interpretation; for in his Defence of the Reflections on Varillas, where Dryden's dramattick writings were certainly not in contemplation, he had said of our author—"It is true he had somewhat to sink from, in matter of wit; but *as to his morals, it is scarce possible for him to grow a worse man than he was.*"¹ The first part of Burnet's History, containing the passage in question, it should be remembered, was written *recentibus odiis*, about ten or twelve years after Dryden's celebrated controversial poem had exhibited him in no very favourable light;² and it is not unreasonable to suppose that this circumstance was not entirely forgotten by the HISTORIAN OF HIS OWN TIME, when our poet was selected from the whole tribe of dramattick offenders, and represented as the person to whom principally the licentiousness of the stage was imputable, in such strong yet ambiguous terms, that whether the *man* was not intended to be censured as well as the poet, may yet be a question among critics.

¹ See p. 196.

² Under the name of the BUZZARD, in THE HIND AND THE PANTHER.

How great soever Dryden's modesty may have been, he was fully sensible of his powers, and on many occasions very frankly avowed his confidence in his own abilities; which he felt, and did not disguise, at a time when he was yet but a candidate for fame, "in the rudiments of his poetry, without a name or reputation in the world."¹ The passages of this kind which are found in his works, are strongly confirmed by a story which the late Lord Chief Justice Marlay,² who died above forty years ago, was fond of relating, and has been communicated to me by my friend, the Lord Bishop of Waterford, his only surviving son. His father became a Templar about the time that the famous Ode for St. Cecilia's day was produced; and being desirous of seeing the Wits, and hearing their conversation, began at an early period to frequent Will's Coffee-House, to which they resorted.

* ALEXANDER'S FEAST, not long after its appear-

¹ See the Epistle prefixed to ANNUS MIRABILIS, 1667:

"And this, Sir, I have done with that boldness, for which I will not stand accountable to any of our *little criticks*, who perhaps are not better acquainted with him [Virgil] than I am."

² The Right Hon. Anthony Marlay, who was successively Attorney-General, Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench in Ireland. He died in 1757.—This anecdote and a few other particulars here mentioned, I communicated some years ago to the editor of the BIOGRAPHIA DRAMATICA; which is noticed only to prevent the *gentle critic* from supposing it to have been borrowed from that work.

ance, being the theme of every Critick, young Marlay, among others, took an opportunity of paying his court to the author ; and happening to sit next him, congratulated him on having produced the finest and noblest Ode that had ever been written in any language. " You are right, young gentleman, (replied Dryden,) a nobler Ode never *was* produced, nor ever *will*.⁶

It has been suggested by a very learned and ingenious writer, that " by that strange fatality which seems to disqualify authors from judging of their own works, Dryden does not appear to have valued this piece ; because he totally omits it in the enumeration and criticism he has given of the rest, in the Preface to the volume [of FABLES]." But the remark is, in the present instance, certainly unfounded. How highly he valued this Ode, appears, not only from the foregoing anecdote, but from a passage in one of his letters to Tonson, written probably in December, 1697 : " I am glad to hear from all hands, that my Ode is esteemed *the best of all my poetry*, by all the town. *I thought so myself*, when I writ it; but being old, I mistrusted my own judgment. I hope it has done you service,

⁶ All traditional sayings appear to disadvantage, and are liable to misconstruction, when unaccompanied by the little circumstances with which they were originally attended ; the manner, the countenance, the tone of the voice, or some slight word which may have escaped the hearer, often qualifying what is said. The strength of this assertion was probably qualified in this way.

and will do more."—It was merely omitted to be mentioned in the introductory Essay prefixed to the volume of *FABLES*, because the object of that Preface was, to apprise the reader of the principal *new* pieces of which it consisted; and *ALEXANDER'S FEAST* was only a republication, having been printed two years before.

All those who respected talents were doubtless not less anxious to see and to converse with this great poet, than the learned Judge to whom we are indebted for the foregoing relation. Among these was Francis Lockier, afterwards Doctor in Divinity and Dean of Peterborough, whose account of his first acquaintance with Dryden has been preserved by Spence, in his *ANECDOTES*; which are enriched with so many judicious observations on men and literature by that gentleman, as render it a subject of the more regret, that a similar Collection made by him in the course of a long life, should not have been preserved; or, if preserved, should be secreted with such care, that no one knows where it may be found.¹ "I was," says

¹ My information concerning Dr. Lockier's Collection of Anecdotes is derived from a passage in the late Bishop Newton's *Memoirs of his own Life*, p. 48, 8vo.:

"His partiality for Peterborough [Dr. Zachary Pearce, afterwards Bishop of Rochester, is the person spoken of,] was owing to his connection with Dr. Lockier, the Dean, with whom he generally passed some time in every summer. Dr. Lockier was a man of ingenuity and learning, had seen a great deal of the world, and was a most pleasant and agreeable companion; was one of Dr. Pearce's most intimate friends, and at his death bequeathed to him

Lockier, "about seventeen, when I first came to town; an odd looking boy, with short rough hair,

his library, which was a good one. As Dr. Lockier was himself an excellent story-teller, so he had written in a large quarto book every good story that ever he had heard in company; and this book used to lie in his parlour, for his visitors to turn over and amuse themselves, till he could come to them. It contained a fund of entertainment; and it is a sign that it was conceived to do so, because some one or other thought it worth while to steal it: it never came to Dr. Pearce's hands, and he often regretted the loss of it.

"Dr. Lockier, in the former part of his life, was chaplain to the factory at Hamburg, from whence he went every year to visit the Court of Hanover; whereby he became very well known to the King, George the First, who knew how to temper the cares of royalty with the pleasures of private life; and commonly invited six or eight of his friends to pass the evening with him. His Majesty seeing Dr. Lockier one day at Court, spoke to the Duchess of Ancaster, who was almost always of the party, that she should ask Dr. Lockier to come that evening.—When the company met in the evening, Dr. Lockier was not there; and the King asked the Duchess, if she had spoken to him, as he desired. 'Yes, (she said,) but the Doctor presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and hopes your Majesty will have the goodness to excuse him at present: he is soliciting some preferment from your Majesty's Ministers; and fears it might be some obstacle to him, if it should be known that he had the honour of keeping such good company.' The King laughed very heartily, and said, he believed he was in the right. Not many weeks afterwards, Dr. Lockier kissed the King's hand for the Deanery of Peterborough; and, as he was raising himself from kneeling, the King inclined for-

and that sort of awkwardness which one always brings up first out of the country with one. How-

wards, and with great good humour whispered in his ear, "Well, now, Doctor, you will not be afraid to come in an evening; I would have you come this evening."

I have more than once already observed, how very rarely traditional stories are correctly told: and the preceding account supplies us with an additional proof of the truth of the observation; for though doubtless the Bishop of Rochester told the Bishop of Bristol that the above-mentioned Manuscript of Dr. Lockier never came to his hands, his Lordship's memory must certainly have deceived him, when he added—that Bishop Pearce "*often regretted the loss of it;*" for, had it come into his possession, he must have immediately consigned it to the flames, in conformity to the solemn injunction of Dr. Lockier's Will, which I have consulted on this occasion. It was made May 12, 1734, and proved May 9, 1741. (PRL. OFF. Spurway, qu. 129.) He bequeathed to Dr. Zachary Pearce, (then Vicar of St. Martin's in the Fields,) all his books both at Peterborough and London; desiring that such books as he was already possessed of, should be given to the Library of the Chapter of Peterborough; and that those of which both their library and Dr. Pearce had duplicates, should be sold, and the produce divided between them. Afterwards follows this clause:

"In the next place, I do adjure my two executors, Doctor Pearce and Secretary Eckersall, by all that is sacred, and as they have any regard to our long friendship and the memory of their dearest friend, that they would burn my sermons, *papers, or manuscripts, whatsoever*, that they find; and this to be done *as soon as possible* after my burial, and in the presence of both my executors, or by the surviving one; unless they or he should find an *imprimatur* in my own hand upon any, which I have yet done upon none."

ever, in spite of my bashfulness and appearance, I used now and then to thrust myself into Will's, to have the pleasure of seeing the most celebrated Wits of that time, who used to resort thither. The second time that ever I was there, Mr. Dryden was speaking of his own things, as he frequently did, especially of such as had been lately published. ' If any thing of mine is good, (says he,) 'tis my MAC-FLECKNOB ; and I value myself the more on it, because 'tis the first piece of ridicule

Francis Lockier was born in 1668 ; and in 1683 became a member of Trinity College, in Cambridge, of the lowest rank, as appears from the following note of his admission : " Franciscus Lockier, fil: Guil: Lockier de Norwich; Schol: ibid: Jo: Burton Ludi-magistro ; ætat: 15; Subsiz: [i. e. a student not yet on the foundation, but an expectant of the first sizership that may become vacant. The term is now not in use.] Tut: Mag^o Lane.—May 9, 1683." His first conversation with Dryden, therefore, took place in the middle of the year 1685, when he was of two years' standing in the University. In Jan. 1686-7 he took the degree of Bachelor of Arts, and that of M. A. in 1690. In 1717, when George the First visited Cambridge, he was created Doctor in Divinity ; and on the 19th of March, 1724-5, was made Dean of Peterborough. (Pat. 11 Geo. I. p. 2. n. 23.) He was also rector of Hansworth and Aston.—I know not the exact time of his death, but it probably happened in 1740 ; for in August, in that year, Dr. John Thomas was made Dean of Peterborough, in his room.—The only printed composition of Dr. Lockier, which I have been able to discover, is a sermon preached before the House of Commons on the 30th of January, 1725-6, which was published by order of the House in the following month.

written in heroicks.' Lockier overhearing this, plucked up his spirit so far, as to say, in a voice just loud enough to be heard, that **MAC-FLECK-NOR** was a very fine poem, but that he had not imagined it to be the first that ever was wrote that way. On this Dryden turned short upon him, as surprised at his interposing; asked him, how long he had been a dealer in poetry; and added, with a smile,—‘But pray, Sir, what is it, that you did imagine to have been writ so before?’ Lockier named Boileau’s **LUTRIN** and Tassoni’s **SECCHIA RAPITA**; which he had read, and knew Dryden had borrowed some strokes from each. ‘Tis true,’ says Dryden;—‘I had forgot them.’ A little after, Dryden went out, and in going spoke to Lockier again, and desired him to come to him the next day. Lockier was highly delighted with the invitation, and was well acquainted with him as long as he lived.”

So early as in the year 1674, it was observed in a controversial tract,⁸ that Dryden had spent seven years at Cambridge, and was then of twice that standing in **Covent-Garden Coffee-House**; of which one of his adversaries says, he might be said to be almost an inhabitant.⁹ The first house of this kind

⁸ Notes and Observations on the **EMPRESS OF MOROCCO**, revised.

⁹ **THE MEDAL OF JOHN BAYES**, 1682, Pref. See also a Note on **LE BABILLARD**, No. 1.:

“M. Dryden étoit tous les jours dans ce **Caffé**, où il se rendoit un nombre considerable de gens d’épée, poëtes, et beaux esprits. Cet auteur parloit-là fort librement de

in London had been opened but a few years before the Restoration. The house which soon afterwards became the place where the Wits assembled,* and continued for at least half a century to be frequented by authors, criticks, beaux, and politicians, was that which has been just mentioned, Will's Coffee-house ; which was kept by *William Urwin*,¹ and

ses ouvrages et de ceux d'autrui. Dans ses discours et dans ses ecrits, il affectoit un grand mepris pour les poëtes Francois, qu'il pilloït néanmoins impitoyablement."

LE BABILLARD is a French translation of the first 176 Numbers of THE TATLER, with Notes, in two volumes, 12mo. printed at Amsterdam in 1735, and again at Basle in 1737. The first volume had been published singly, in 1723. See the new edition of THE TATLER, in 6 vols. 1786 ; vol. ii. p. 196.

The translator, as I am informed by a very accurate inquirer, (for I have never seen LE BABILLARD,) appears to have been a foreigner, resident in England at or about the time of the original publication of THE TATLER.

* Dryden, in his Prologue to THE INDIAN EMPEROR, acted in 1665, speaks of *Coffee-criticks* ; and Steele, in THE TATLER, No. 84, October 22, 1709, mentions a friend, who had gained some applause by an Epigram written soon after the Restoration, on the credit of which he had lived ever afterwards, having in virtue of it been a frequenter of Will's Coffee-House for *forty years*.

¹ In a Letter from Dennis to Walter Moyle, on the Master of this House having absconded for debt, dated from Will's, Nov. 5, 1695, the writer asks his correspondent,—“ Have not you heard

“ These sounds upon the Cornish shore,—

“ The sage *Will Urwin* is no more.”

" Wit, and tea, and coffi
 " Tell me, for, as the comm
 " Thy house is cramm'd eter
 " How shall I that strange a
 " What are his marks, his vi
 " So may'st thou still keep in
 " And never lose a farthing n
 " Thus I inquir'd, and straigh
 " His *nutmeg*, *spoon*, and garte
 " He that like Mountford sing
 " Dresses like Russel, like Tr

As the mixture now called *Neg*
 in Queen Anne's time by Colone
 known, Will's *nutmeg* was probab
 a flavour to *punch*, a beverage whic
 ginally come to us from India.
 entitled THE CHARACTER OF A COF

" The Germans' mum, Teag's
 " (Made him so well defend Ti
 " Metheglin, which the Britons
 " Hot brandy-wine, the Hogan
 " Stout meade, which makes the
 " *Spiced PUNCH*, in bowls. the L
 " A H

was informed by Mr. Swiney, who was himself a dramattick writer, and one of Dryden's contemporaries, "his armed chair, which in the winter had a settled and prescriptive place by the fire, was in the summer placed in the balcony; and he called the two places his winter and his summer seat." The only intelligence that old Mr. Cibber, another of his contemporaries, could furnish, was, that at this house "the appeal was made to him upon any literary dispute." It should be remembered, that at

23, 1685,—that "tickets for the Annual Feast of the loyal inhabitants of Westminster in Westminster-Hall, are to be had at Will's Coffee-house in Bow-street end,"—compared with other publications of the last age. Dennis's Letters were printed in 1696, for Samuel Briscoe in Russel-street, at the corner of Charles-street, in Covent-Garden; and in the titlepage of a comedy published in 1693, by the same bookseller, he is described as living in Russel-street, in Covent-Garden, over-against Will's, Coffee-house.

This once celebrated house is now occupied by a perfumer, and is No. 23, in Great Russel-street.

Dr. Johnson has not mentioned the names of his informers, in the Life of Dryden; but they are supplied (with some slight addition) by Mr. Boswell, in his Life of Johnson, ii. 437, 2d edit. "Talking [in 1776] of the great difficulty of obtaining authentick information for biography, Johnson told us, 'When I was a young fellow, I wanted to write the Life of Dryden, and, in order to get materials, I applied to the only two persons then alive, who had seen him; and these were old Swiney and old Cibber. Swiney's information was no more than this; that Dryden had a particular chair, &c. Cibber could tell no more, than that he remembered him a decent old man,

man of observation
In a conversati
months before hi
in any intimacy wi
sometimes in comp
more ignorant tha
man to be, who had
criticks, and some
the age.—He died i

* See Ward's Lo
we adjourned to the
~~we went~~, and found m
if every one remem
mouth makes a wise
silence to be counted
speaking to stand the c
The company did no
at various tables, which
So, *ibid.* " We shoulde
philosophical mutes to t
three or four Wits of the
at a table. . . . At a *secon*
young raw second-rate h
T

was called in the last century ; and hence it is, that we hear of a balcony.

At Will's, and all the other coffee-houses in London, the company frequently sat enveloped with the fumes of tobacco, in consequence of smoking being permitted in the publick room ;

So, in THE CHARACTER OF A COFFEE-HOUSE, 1668 :

" Here, you're not thrust into a box,
 " As taverns do, to catch the fox ;
 " But as from th' top of Paul's high steeple
 " Th' whole city's view'd, ev'n so all people
 " May here be seen."

' See THE CHARACTER OF A COFFEE-HOUSE, at *supra* :

" — if you see the great Morat
 " With sash on 's head, instead of hat ;
 " Or any Sultan in his dress,
 " Or picture of a Sultaness ;
 " Or John's admired curled pate,
 " Or th' great Mogul in 's chair of state ;
 " Or Constantine, the Grecian,
 " Who, fourteen years, was the only man
 " That made coffee for the great Bashaw ;
 " (Although the man he never saw,)—
 " Or, if you see a coffee-cup
 " Fill'd from a Turkish pot, hung up
 " Within the clouds, and round it *pipes*,
 " *Wax candles, stoppers*, these are types, —
 " Which plainly do spectators tell
 " That in that house they coffee sell."

Constantine was probably the Greek servant (of Mr. Edwards, a Turkey-merchant,) who first introduced coffee into England, in 1652.

puns and quibbles, it may be presumed was Captain Swan,⁸ a celebrated gamester and punster of that day.—But the second of these parties predominated here so much, that the house was frequently called the Wits' Coffee-house.

The last age should seem to have delighted in ballads and lampoons, much more than the present, if we may judge from the numerous compositions of that nature, which were issued out. Instead of being committed to the press, they were often published in no other way than by being handed about in manuscript;⁹ or sold by one Julian,¹ a hawker, who was sometimes distinguished

⁸ See Dennis's Letter to Mr. — at Will's Coffee-house, &c. "I cited honest Mr. Sw[an], but it is a hard case, if the quoting an author must be construed the condemning his works. I have a great respect and kindness for Mr. Sw[an], as I have for all who have any excellence: and truly I think that for the management of *quibbles* and dice, there is no man alive comes near him." —This gentleman is also mentioned with kindness by our author, (see vol. iii. p. 194,) to whom he wrote a quibbling letter, reminding him of his promise to give him a pound of snuff; which is printed in the second volume of Briscoe's Familiar Letters, p. 248.

⁹ "When any papers of verses in *manuscript*, which are worth your reading, come abroad, you shall be sure of them." Dryden to Mrs. Steward, March 4, 1698-9. See also p. 133.

¹ Various poems addressed to Mr. Julian, are found in the Miscellaneous Collections of the last age; one of which, beginning thus—

by the pompous title of *Secretary to the Muses*; or thrown by the writers or their friends on the tables at Will's; where, Steele tells us, when Dryden frequented it, "you used to see songs, epigrams, and satires, in the hand of every man you met:" but a few years afterwards the place was so much altered, that cards were substituted for the poetical compositions which had formerly engaged the attention of all the company; and, instead of the cavils about turns of expression and elegance of style, the learned only disputed about the truth of the game.* In the critical

"Thou common sewer of this poetick town, - - -

"For sonnet, satire, bawdry, blasphemy,

"Are emptied and disburthen'd all in thee,—

has been erroneously ascribed to our author.

In MS. Harl. 7317, p. 1. is a poem addressed to this person, who in the margin is said to be—"A fellow that did disperse lampoons."—By transcribing, he multiplied the copies, according to the demand, and thus earned a livelihood:

"Thou, Julian, or thou wise Vespasian, rather,

"Dost from this dung thy well-pick'd guineas gather:

"All mischief's thine; *transcribing*, thou wilt stoop

"From lofty Middlesex to lowly Scroop."

He is described as a very drunken fellow, and at one time was confined, for a libel. About 1690 he went to France, whence he should seem, from his name, (which was probably *Julien*,) to have originally come. In an anonymous Letter written not long afterwards, the writer says to his correspondent, "You shall henceforward be Secretary to the Witty Club, as Julian was to their mistresses."

* TATLER, Numb. 1.

play ; but found th
them, a true critick
only raised up pha
to DON SEBASTIAN
LOVE : " I should n
French poets, but th
form their judgment
the Dedication of T.
heard some whispering,
play of smuttinets," &

In the first Act of T
lowing dialogue :

" BAYES. My next
way of *table-book* :—pr

" JOHNS. We hear,

" BAYES. As thus. I
other place, where wi
minded nothing : do y
speaks, pop ! I *slap it d*

As there are in this
thor's expressions and
a reference to him.—I
with a *table-book*

he occasionally minuted in a table-book the objections that were made to his writings by the *Chedreux* criticks of the day.

According to Pope, Dryden was the person who made Will's Coffee-house the place of resort for the Wits of his time.⁴ About twelve years after his death, Addison led them to Button's, who was a servant of his, and opened a house in Covent-Garden, on the south side of Great Russel-street.

Dryden, as he has himself told us, lived in Gerard-street, probably from the time of his marriage; and his house (for why should it not be as precisely ascertained as the various places of Milton's residence?) was the fifth on the left hand, in coming from Little Newport-street.⁵ Behind, his apartments looked into the gardens of Leicester-House. He had long lived there; for it was in returning from Will's to his own house, in December, 1679, that he was way-laid by braves and cruelly beaten; Rose-street, or as it ought rather to be called, Rose-alley, being the shortest

⁴ Spence's ANECDOTES.—Pope says, "After his death, Addison transferred it to Button's," &c.; but he could not mean, *immediately* afterwards; for it appears from THE TATLER, and from a letter of Henry Cromwell to Pope, that Will's continued to be frequented by the Wits at least till 1710. Probably Addison established his servant in a new house about 1712; and his fame, after the production of CATO, drew thither many of the Whigs.

⁵ Letter to Mrs. Steward, about October, 1698.—Dryden's house in Gerard-street is now numbered, 43.

way from Covent-Garden to Gerard-street.—As even the domestick day of such a man cannot be uninteresting, I may add, that he usually devoted his mornings to the composition of his various works; and his place of study was by no means convenient, for he commonly wrote in a room on the ground-floor, next the street.⁶ The hour of dinner, even in the latest period of his time, did not, I believe, exceed two o'clock;⁷ and plays began at four in the afternoon.⁸ Between three and four he repaired to the Coffee-house,⁹ and there a great part of the evening was spent. “Addison,” says Pope, “passed each day alike, and much in the same manner as Dryden did. Dryden employed his mornings in writing; dined *en famille*, and then went to Will’s;—only he came home earlier o’ nights.”⁹—In Addison’s time it was customary,

⁶ Spence.

⁷ From a passage in a letter from Congreve to Dennis, dated Tunbridge-Wells, Aug. 11, 1695, the dinner-hour at that place should seem then to have been at *noon*. In 1702, the hour of dinner in London, at the west end of the town, was *two* o’clock, or half past two; and in the City they dined at twelve. See Gildon’s *Comparison between the two Stages*, p. 69. In 1740, persons of fashion dined at *four* o’clock, (Cibber’s *APOL.* p. 101.) and citizens at two.

⁸ See the Epilogue to *THE SHE-GALLANTS*, performed in 1696:

“On pain of being posted to your sorrow,

“Fail not at *four* to meet me here to-morrow.”

⁹ Reasons of Mr. Bayes’s changing, &c. Part I. p. 32.

⁹ Addison, as Pope related to Mr. Spence, “studied all the morning; then met his party at Button’s, dined

at about seven or eight o'clock, to retire from the coffee-house to the tavern, where wine, and frequently pipes and tobacco, were immediately called for; and in an hour or two afterwards they supped, and then again circulated the bottle.

Dryden having declared of himself, that he was saturnine and reserved, and not one of those who endeavour to entertain company by lively sallies of merriment and wit,¹ the author of the lampoon entitled *A SATIRE TO HIS MUSE*, has made him say,

“ Nor wine, nor love, could ever see me gay ;

“ To writing bred, I knew not what to say.”

Dr. Johnson, after quoting these lines, observes, that “ we must be content to believe what an adversary says of him, when he likewise says it of himself.” But surely his representation of his convivial talents must be acknowledged to have

there, and stayed five or six hours, and sometimes far into the night.” “ I was (adds Pope) of the company for about a year, but I found it too much for me : it hurt my health ; and so I quitted it.”—In another place his account is more conformable to the representation given in the text : “ Addison's chief companions, before he married Lady Warwick, [1716,] were Steele, Budgell, Phillips, Carew D'Avenant, and Colonel Brett. He used to breakfast with one or other of them at his lodgings in St. James's Place ; *dine at taverns* with them : *then to Button's*, and then to *some tavern again*, for supper and the evening : and this was the usual round of his life.”

¹ Defence of the Essay of Dramatick Poesy, vol. i. part ii p. 163.

gained somewhat, as it passed through the hands of his censorer; and there can be little doubt, that, though he might not be entitled to the character of a gay fellow or spritely talker, his conversation^a was easy, cheerful, and full of information; and that he, whose "thoughts flowed upon him so fast, that his only care was, which to choose and which to reject," could not but have been a pleasing and instructive companion. He was accordingly highly respected and caressed by many of the most eminent persons of his time; for among his convivial friends we find the first Duke of Ormond, Lord Roscommon, Philip Earl of Leicester, Lord Danby, the Marquis of Halifax, Lord Dorset, Lord Carbery, Lord Mulgrave, Lord Peterborough, Sir William Trumbull, and Sir Charles Sidley; and how entertaining and lively their conversation was, to which Dryden would scarcely have been admitted, if he had not contributed his share, we may judge from a slight circumstance

^a It is thus characterized by a contemporary writer:

"O, Sir, there's a medium in all things. Silence and chat are distant enough, to have a convenient discourse come between 'em; and thus far I agree with you, that the company of the Author of *ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL* is more valuable, though not so talkative, than that of the modern men of *banter*; for what he says is like what he writes, much to the purpose, and full of mighty sense; and if the Town were for any thing desirable, 'twere for the conversation of him and one or two more of the same character."—" *The Humours and Conversation of the Town exposed, in two Dialogues.*" 1693, p. 73.

related in the Life of the Duke of Ormond :—
 “ Once in a quarter of a year,” says Carte, “ he used to have the Marquis of Halifax, the Earls of Mulgrave, Dorset, and Danby, Mr. Dryden, and others of that set of men, at supper ; and then they were merry, and drank hard. At one of these entertainments, two of his gentlemen, Preston and Crawford, both of them Scotsmen,¹ curious to hear the conversation, and desirous to partake of the vivacity of the company, stayed behind the Duke’s chair, till the company had drank a bottle a-piece ; when his Grace, observing them, said, ‘ Gentlemen, this is not fair ; if you stay and hear our conversation, you should sit down and drink your bottle fairly with us, or else leave us to ourselves :’—upon which they retired.”²

I may add, that his company and conversation were sought not only by many highly distinguished for their parts and eminence in the state, but by a numerous band of lively and ingenious young men, who, notwithstanding a great disparity of age, seem to have not only loved and respected him, but to have delighted in his society ; and the many hours which he passed with Southerne, Congreve, Oldham, Creech, Garth, Duke, Chet-

¹ *Scottish men*, and *Scotchmen*, are very intelligible, and so is a *Scot*, or *Scots* : but what can be made of *Scotsmen* ? With equal propriety we might call the people of England, *Britonsmen*. Yet many of the Scottish writers themselves are guilty of the barbarism here used by Carte.

² Life of James, Duke of Ormond, vol. ii. p. 554.

wood, Walsh, Vanbrugh, Moyle, St. John, Maynwaring, and Granville, afford a very strong proof of his companionable qualities. He has himself observed, that the civilest man in the company is commonly the dullest : we may be confident, therefore, that his claim to the society and affection of the young, the accomplished, and the gay, was not merely good humour and good-breeding ; and that they were drawn to him by many other attractions beside that suavity of disposition and manners, which all his contemporaries ascribe to him.

However he may have been surpassed by some of those Wits with whom he conversed, in the ready use of the intellectual treasures which he unquestionably possessed, a few of his spritely sayings have been preserved.

According to Steele, ' " when a young fellow just come from the play of CLEOMENES, told him in raillery against the continency of his principal character, ' If I had been left alone with a fair lady, I should not have passed my time like your Spartan ; ' ' That may be,' answered the bard, with a very grave face ; ' but give me leave to tell you, Sir, you are no hero. "

Lady Elizabeth Dryden, one morning, having come into his study at an unseasonable time, when he was intently employed on some composition, and

' GUARDIAN, No. 45. In the Preface to CLEOMENES, we find a similar remark : our author, however, might have made the reply mentioned by Steele, at Will's Coffee-house, and have afterwards availed himself of the same observation, when he published his play.

finding he did not attend to her, exclaimed, 'Lord ! Mr. Dryden, you are always poring upon these musty books ;—I wish I was a book, and then I should have more of your company.' ' Well, my dear,' replied the poet, ' when you do become a book, 'pray, let it be an Almanack ; for then, at the end of the year, I shall lay you quietly on the shelf, and shall be able to pursue my studies without interruption.'

Being with Lord Mulgrave* at his seat near Whitby, in Yorkshire, they agreed to play a match at bowls, and promised that neither of them would try the ground beforehand. In the evening, however, Dryden's servant discovered his Lordship taking his distances, and measuring his casts ; and informed his master. He took no notice of it ; but the next day, after Dryden had bowled, Lord Mulgrave, before he delivered his bowl, cried out,—' My life, Dryden, to a turnip, that I beat you.' ' Lay me an even wager, my Lord,' said the bard, ' and I will take it up.'"

* From the late Horace, Earl of Orford.

* This nobleman (afterwards Duke of Buckinghamshire,) was extremely fond of bowling, and is said to have lost large sums of money in betting at this game. He is supposed to be alluded to in the following lines by Pope, in *THE BASSET TABLE*, an Eclogue :

" At the Groom-porters batter'd bullies play ;
 " Some *Dukes* at Marybone bowl time away :
 " But who the bowl or rattling dice compares
 " To Basset's heavenly joys and pleasing cares ?
 ' GENT. MAG. vol. xlix. p. 493.

A gentleman returning from one of D'Urfey's plays, the first night it was acted, said to Dryden, 'Was there ever such stuff? I could not have imagined that even this author could have written so ill.' 'O, Sir,' replied the old bard, 'you don't know my friend Tom so well as I do: I'll answer for him, he shall write worse yet.'*

Notwithstanding his confidence in his own powers, and the just value which he set on his performances, tradition informs us, that he was not wholly free from jealousy of rivals. "He would compliment Crowne, (as old Jacob Tonson told Mr. Spence,) when a play of his failed; but was cold to him, if he met with success. He sometimes used to say, that Crowne had some

* THE MEDLEY, by Mr. Maynwaring, No. 16.—Of Pope's vivacity in conversation, still fewer instances have been recorded: but *two*, I think.—I am well aware, how hazardous it is, to produce any lively sayings professedly as *wit*: but if those here mentioned should not appear entitled to that appellation, let it be considered, that they are introduced only because they happen to have been transmitted to us; and that many of Dryden's happier effusions may have perished. Lord Rochester, Lord Dorset, Sir Charles Sidley, and Sir Fleetwood Shephard, were all acknowledged by their contemporaries to be men of wit; yet how few of their *good things* have been preserved! *Urgentur longâ nocte, carent quia vate sacro*. If it had not been for the late Mr. Boswell, posterity would not have known that Dr. Johnson was one of the *wittiest*, as well as wisest and most virtuous, men of the present century.

genius; but then he always added, that his father and Crowne's mother were very well acquainted."

When Otway first began to rise into reputation, and for some years afterwards, he appears to have been under-rated by Dryden; though, towards the end of the reign of Charles the Second, politicks in some measure united them. Gildon supposes, that he had no taste for the pathetick, because, when in his latter days Euripides was recommended to him, instead of Homer, of whose

' Spence's ANECDOTES.—It has already been observed, that a story always loses somewhat, when it is taken out of its *setting*. The tone of voice with which these words were spoken, and the smile which probably accompanied them, doubtless ascertained Dryden's meaning, and shewed that they were not spoken in *sober sadness*.

' Otway, in the following passage of the Preface to his second play, DON CARLOS, which was acted early in 1676, and published in the same year, unquestionably alludes to Dryden, though he has not named him: "This I may modestly boast of, (which the author of the French *Bernice* has done before me, in his Preface to that play,) that it [DON CARLOS] never failed to draw tears from the eyes of the auditors; I mean those, whose souls were capable of so noble a pleasure; . . . though a *certain* writer, that shall be nameless, (but you may guess at him by what follows,) being asked his opinion of this play, very gravely *cock'd*, and cried, ' *I gad, he knew not a line in it he would be author of:*' but he is a fine facetious witty person, as my friend Sir Formal has it; and to be even with him, I know a comedy of his, that has not so much as a quibble in it, which I would be author of; and so, reader, I bid him and thee farewell."

Iliad he then meditated a translation, he acknowledged that he had no relish for that poet ; a defect which Gildon imputes to his having been long conversant with French romances. In another place, for he has told this story twice,² he says, that he was himself the person who proposed Euripides to our author, and that he replied, that "*he did not like that poet ;*" but probably all that he really said, was, that Homer was *more to his taste* than Euripides, for the same reasons which made him prefer the former to Virgil. "Homer," says he to Mr. Montague, "is a poet more according to my taste than Virgil, and consequently I hope I may do him more justice in his fiery way of writing ; which, as it is liable to more faults, so it is capable of more beauties than the exactness and sobriety of Virgil."¹—But however deficient in pathos his own scenical productions may have been, he well knew, that to express the passions and emotions of the mind, as it is the greatest

Dr. Johnson (from Cibber's LIVES OF THE POETS.) mentions a tradition, that DON CARLOS was so favourably received, that it was played *thirty* nights together ; an account, the truth of which he very justly doubts :—Downes, who was prompter to the Duke's Theatre, where it was performed, tells us, that it was acted *ten* nights successively, and brought the house more money than any preceding tragedy.

² Remarks on Shakspeare's Plays, 8vo, 1710. Laws of Poetry, 8vo. 1721, p. 211.

¹ Letter to the Right Hon. Charles Montague, written in October or November, 1699.

difficulty, so it is the highest excellency of the dramatick art. At an early period, indeed, he was of opinion, that the scenes best suited to *heroick* plays were those of argumentation and discourse, on the result of which the doing or not doing of some considerable action should depend : but he seems to have considered them as a peculiar species ;* and has acknowledged that, in general, the drama, where all that is said is supposed to be the effect of sudden thought, admits not a too curious selection of words, too frequent allusions or use of tropes, or, in fine, any thing that shews remoteness of thought, or labour in the writer :† “ not,” says he, in another place, “ that I discommend the lofty style in tragedy, which is naturally pompous and magnificent ; but nothing is truly sublime, that is not just and proper.” And hence it was, that at length he did justice to Otway ; acknowledging that, not by pains or study, but by the gift of heaven,† he was a great master of the pathetick : “ not,” he adds, “ that I

* See vol. i. part ii. p. 218 : “ I have modelled my heroick plays by the rules of an heroick poem.”

† Vol. ii. p. 261.

† Pope also seems to have entertained this notion concerning Otway ; for having observed to Mr. Spence, that this poet had “ written but two tragedies, out of six, that are pathetick,” he adds, “ I believe he did it without much design, as Lillo has done in his *BARNWELL*. *It is a talent of nature, rather than an effect of judgement, to write so movingly.*”

will defend every thing in his *VANICE PRESERVED*; but I must bear this testimony to his merits, that the passions are truly touched in it, though there is somewhat to be desired, both in the grounds of them and in the height and elegance of expression; but *nature is there, which is the greatest beauty.*"⁶

On his early disregard of Otway's plays, a tale has been founded, of which the progressive heightening and amplification are easily detected. We are told that Dryden, being asked what he thought of Southerne, said, that "he would make *such a poet as Otway*;" which being repeated to Southerne by a friend, he replied, that he had no ambition to be a greater poet. Such is the relation given, about sixty years afterwards, by a person who was acquainted with that writer.⁷ Gildon, however, not long after Dryden's death, relating the same anecdote,—to prove that he had no taste for the pathetick, informs us, that our author, "being one day at a coffee-house, with a gentleman who had met with great success in some of his plays, [meaning certainly Southerne,] told *him*, 'he would make *much such another poet as Otway*;' to which the gentleman replied, that 'he desired to be no greater.'"⁸ Here we see, how easily what is intended for an eulogy, may by a slight change of terms, be converted into sarcasm, or at least, de-

⁶ Preface to the translation of Du Fresnoy, 1695.

⁷ Cibber's *LIVES OF THE POETS*, vol. v. p. 329.

⁸ Remarks on Shakspeare's Plays, 8vo. 1710.

preciation.—The chronology of a story is often of great service in ascertaining its authenticity. The play which gave rise to this conversation, was **THE FATAL MARRIAGE**; which was produced in the beginning of the year 1694, and performed with great success. We have seen from the passage just quoted, which was written in the following year, how high an opinion of Otway, Dryden then entertained; and therefore may be assured, that he could not at that period intend to speak slightly of him. We know also, that he had a very warm esteem for Southerne. Can there then remain a doubt, that the fact was, that, to do honour to Southerne, when his admirable tragedy was the general subject of conversation, he publicly praised it in the highest terms, by pronouncing, *ex cathedra*, not to the author, but to the assembly of Wits and Criticks at Will's Coffee-house, that *another Otway had arisen among them*;—that his friend Southerne had equalled the great master of the pathetick, in that in which he was allowed to have excelled all the other poets of his time.

On the jealousy of other writers which he sometimes shewed, his enemies, who were always ready to exaggerate his foibles, and to blacken his character by every means in their power, constructed another charge, of a more malignant kind; accusing him of having incited Creech to translate Horace, that by his failure in that work he might lose the reputation which he had gained by his poetical version of Lucretius. Of this accusation

it would perhaps be sufficient to say, with Doctor Johnson, that it is merely conjectural; for no man would avow such a purpose: but I add further, and with perfect confidence, that it was an impudent and malicious falsehood. The original inventor of this calumny should seem to have been Tom Brown, for I cannot trace it higher than to a pamphlet published by him in 1690;* and from

* The reasons of Mr. Bayes's changing his Religion. Part II. p. 53. Creech, about seven weeks after Dryden's death, having hung himself at Oxford, that desperate and criminal act has been ascribed by some writers to his discontent on account of the ill success of his *Horace* (which was published *sixteen years* before); and on this ground it has been insinuated, that Dryden was ultimately the cause of his unhappy end: by others it has been imputed to his being slighted by a lady to whom he paid his addresses. But both his will, and a will made by the lady, though afterwards revoked by her marriage, shew there was no foundation for the latter surmise; and the late Mr. Warton (*Life of Bathurst*, 8vo. 1761, p. 188,) has stated, from an original letter of Dr. Arthur Charlett, Master of University College, in Ballard's Collection in the Bodleian Library, that "there was a fellow-collegian of whom Creech frequently borrowed money; but that repeating his applications too often, he met one day with a cold reception, and in a fit of gloomy disgust retired, and in three days was found hanging in his study."—To this account I may add, that he was probably *insane*; as may be collected from a letter written by Mr. Tanner, afterwards Bishop of St. Asaph, to the person above named, Dr. Charlett; from which I some years ago transcribed the following paragraph. Tanner's letter is dated "at Mr. Marches, Charles-street, St. Jameses

Brown it was copied into several other books. The foundation on which it was built, shews on how slight a ground a scandalous tale is often credited; for that Dryden, when he was in the meridian splendour of his fame, was afraid of the growing reputation of Creech, was merely inferred from some *anonymous* verses prefixed to his *Lucretius*; in which the writer exhorts the youthful poet to proceed to other similar tasks, and to translate both Virgil and Horace. These verses, which are so harsh and nerveless, that it is strange they ever should have been imputed to the author of *ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL*, his enemies, after

Square, May 14," no year being set down: but, from circumstances mentioned, it appears to have been written in May, 1700:

"I found out Mr. Creech yesterday, at Jacob Tonsen's. He complained to me of a fever, that he had had upon him ever since his coming to town, which, and his want of habit, has hindered him from waiting on Dr. Wake; tho' I believe 'twill not be hard to prove that he has been abroad every day. But I am very glad to hear that he is come to his senses again, and wish he may not relapse. I always feared he would be mad at last: and the only way to prevent it, will be, to help him to such preferment as his great merit deserves; for notwithstanding his failings, I can't chuse but respect him, out of regard to his learning." Mss. BALLARD. in Bibl. Bodl. vol. iv. p. 26.

Gildon's *Comparison between the two Stages*, 1702; Coward's *LICENTIA POETICA*, 8vo. 1708. Gibber's *LIVES OF THE POETS*, 1763.

the ill success of Creech in his *Horace*, constantly ascribed to Dryden. We now, however, know, from the testimony of Fenton, that they were written by a person whose name he knew, but has concealed; who, "though he had conversed familiarly with the best poets of our nation for almost half a century, never professed himself a member of that faculty."¹—Here I might leave this subject: but another poet, whose works, though little known, have considerable merit,² by an inquiry made above fifty years ago from an intimate friend of our author, has enabled me still more decisively to refute this injurious calumny. The person to whom I allude, is the reverend George Russel, a man of ingenuity and learning; who was bred at St. Mary-Hall, in Oxford, and about the

¹ Observations on Waller's Poems, 4to. 1729, page lxxviii.

² In fidelity and elegance, perhaps few translations surpass Mr. Russel's version of the well-known epigram of AMALTHEUS:

"Lumine Acon dextro, capta est Leonilla sinistro,

"Et potis est formâ vincere uterque deos:

"Blande puer, lumen quod habes concede sorori;

"Sic tu cæcus AMOR, sic erit illa VENUS."

"But one bright eye young Acon's face adorns,

"For one bright eye fair Leonilla mourns.

"Kind youth, to her thy single orb resign,

"To make her perfect, and thyself divine:

"For then, would Heaven the happy change allow,

"She should fair Venus be, blind Cupid thou."

year 1753 obtained a living in the diocese of Cork, in Ireland, by the favour and patronage, as I collect from some of his letters in the Bodleian Library, of John, the fifth Earl of Cork and Orrery. With that nobleman he appears to have lived in intimacy; having, in 1744, spent some time with him at Marston, where perhaps he had an opportunity of conversing with Southerne the poet, who was a frequent visiter there. "I have often heard," says Mr. Russel,⁴ "that Mr. Dryden, dis-

⁴ The works of the late Rev. George Russel, Rector of Skull, in the diocese of Cork, 8vo. 1769, vol. ii. p. 338. Mr. George Russel, as appears from the Matriculation-Register of the University of Oxford, was the son of Christopher Russel, of the Island of Minorca, Esq.; and was born in the year 1728. He was bred at Westminster School; in 1746 was admitted a member of St. Mary Hall, and matriculated May 28, in that year, two days after the death of Southerne; at which time he was eighteen years old. He commenced a poet in 1744, or before; for in his Collection are Verses on seeing Lady Elizabeth Boyle dance at Marston on her father's birthday, in the beginning of that year. In April, 1750, he was admitted B. A., but did not determine or complete his degree till 1752; and in the next year, or soon afterwards, he obtained his preferment in Ireland, where he died in 1767.—He appears to have been an intimate friend of Hamilton Boyle, the second son of John, Earl of Orrery, who afterwards succeeded to the title; and to have often visited Marston, where probably he met with Southerne.

In an address to that poet, imitated from Martial, Lib. vi. Epig. 70, and written probably in 1744 or 1745.

satisfied and envious at the reputation Creech obtained by his translation of Lucretius, purposely advised him to undertake Horace, to which he knew him unequal, that he might by his ill performance lose the fame he had acquired. Mr. Southerne, author of *Oroonoko*, set me right as to the conduct of Mr. Dryden, in this affair; affirming, that being one evening at Mr. Dryden's lodgings, in company with Mr. Creech and some other ingenious men, Mr. Creech told the company of his design to translate Horace; from which Mr. Dryden with many arguments dissuaded him, as an attempt which his genius was not adapted to, and which would risk his losing the good opinion the world had of him, by his successful translation of Lucretius. I thought it proper to acquaint you with this circumstance, since it rescues the fame of

Mr. Russel mentions a singular circumstance relative to him:

" Southerne, I think, is now fourscore ;

" His years he counts with transport o'er :

" From youth's fair May till old December,

" *No hour of pain he can remember ;*

" *He never gave a single fee*

" To Friend or Radcliffe, Mead or Lee," &c.

Were the author correct with respect to Southerne's age, these verses must have been written in 1739, when he was a young boy: but they are more likely to have been written at the time above mentioned, when he erroneously, or for the sake of rhyme, supposed Southerne only fourscore. In 1745, he was in fact, eighty-six years old.— See p. 176, n. 3.

one of our greatest poets from the imputation of envy and malevolence."

Though Dryden was certainly not a laborious and systematick student, and from his natural diffidence always speaks with great modesty concerning his learning,¹ there can be no doubt that he had read a great variety of books; and that his mind was abundantly stored with miscellaneous and general knowledge. "For my own part," says he, "who must confess to my shame that I never read any thing but for pleasure, history has always been the most delightful entertainment of my life; but they who have employed the study of it as they ought, for their instruction, for the regulation of their private manners, and the management of publick affairs, must agree with me, that it is the most pleasant school of wisdom. It is a familiarity with past ages, and an acquaintance with all the heroes of them; it is, if you will pardon the similitude, a prospective glass, carrying your soul to a vast distance, and taking in the furthest objects of antiquity. It informs the understanding, by the memory; it helps us to judge of what will happen, by showing us the like revolutions of former times. For mankind being the same in all ages, agitated by the same passions, and moved to action by the same interests, nothing can come to pass, but some proceeding of the like nature has already been produced; so that having the causes before our eyes, we cannot

¹ See vol. ii. p. 310, and vol. iii. p. 233.

easily be deceived in the effects, if we have judgment enough but to draw the parallel."⁶

Hence, even at the early age of ten, he had read Polybius; and afterwards doubtless made himself master of the Greek, Roman, and modern historians. Horace, Virgil, Quintilian, Shakspeare, Montagne, and Tasso, appear to have been his favourite authors. The latter, whom he has styled the most excellent of all the modern poets, he tells us he revered next to Virgil.⁷ He had read a great many romances, in most of the modern languages; a taste which led him not only highly to estimate *Don Quixote*,⁸ but to peruse with pleasure even the *History of Reynard the Fox*,⁹ and the numerous collection of old English ballads possessed by his patron, the Earl of Dorset, in

⁶ Vol. ii. p. 397.

⁷ Vol. i. Part ii. p. 204.

⁸ "Is it not great pity, - - that a man who hath read *Don Quixote* for the greatest part of his life, should pretend to interpret the Bible, or trace the footsteps of tradition, even in the darkest ages?"—REFLECTIONS ON THE HIND AND THE PANTHER, by T. Brown, 4to. 1687.

⁹ "I find, (says Gildon,) Mr. Bayes, the Younger, [Rowe,] has two qualities like Mr. Bayes, the Elder; his admiration of some odd books, as *Reynard the Fox*, and the old ballads of *Jane Shore*, &c.—REMARKS ON MR. ROWE'S PLAYS, 12mo. 1715.

See also THE HIND AND THE PANTHER TRANSVERSED:

"*Smith*. You sometimes read as bad authors. I have heard you quote *Reynard the Fox*.

which Addison informs us they both took great delight.¹

Though his morals were aspersed, and his writings censured and ridiculed, in innumerable libels,²

"Bayes. Why there's it now : take it from me, Mr. Smith, there is as good morality and as sound precepts in the *Delectable History of Reynard the Fox*, as in any book I know, except Seneca."

¹ SPECTATOR, No. 85.

² "More libels," says he, "have been written against me, than almost any man now living; and I had reason on my side, to have defended my own innocence.—I speak not of my poetry, which I have wholly given up to the criticks: let them use it as they please: posterity perhaps may be more favourable to me; for interest and passion will lie buried in another age, and partiality and prejudice be forgotten. I speak of my morals, which have been sufficiently aspersed: that only sort of reputation ought to be dear to every honest man, and is to me. But let the world witness for me, that I have been often wanting to myself in this particular; I have seldom answered any scurrilous lampoon, when it was in my power to have exposed my enemies; and being naturally vindictive, have suffered in silence, and possessed my soul in quiet."—See vol. iii. p. 171.

The following passage on the same topick, in his letter to Dennis, written in 1694, exhibits some traits of his character, which have been already noticed:

"For my morals betwixt man and man, I am not to be my own judge; I appeal to the world, if I have deceived or defrauded any man:—and for my private conversation, they who see me every day can be the best witnesses, whether or no it be blameless and inoffensive. Hitherto I have no reason to complain, that men of either

he seldom condescended to mention his opponents: trusting, that the blameless tenour of his life would sufficiently confute his calumniators; and that when *partiality and prejudice should be forgotten, posterity would be more favourable to him*, and rightly appreciate his works. Of their great excellence he could not be ignorant; but it is no inconsiderable proof of both his genius and his candour, that he was not insensible to their defects. Whatever praises of his performances may have occasionally fallen from him, which were in some measure extorted by the ungenerous attempts of his adversaries to depreciate him,¹ he has himself told us, that he *was rarely pleased with his own endeavours*. His mind had too large a grasp, to permit him to be entirely satisfied with his compositions, "*which seldom reached to those ideas that he had within him*:"⁴ and hence probably it was, that he submitted many of his pieces in

party shun my company. I have never been an impudent beggar at the doors of noblemen. My visits have indeed been too rare, to be unacceptable; and but just enough to testify my gratitude for their bounty, which I have frequently received, but always unasked, as themselves will witness."

¹ "If a man can ever have reason to set a value on himself, it is, when his ungenerous enemies are taking the advantage of the times upon him, to ruin him in his reputation." Preface to *DON SEBASTIAN*; 1690. He elsewhere observes, that "a man may be just to himself, though he may not be partial."

⁴ Vol. ii. p. 54; vol. iii. p. 40.

manuscript to his friends,⁵ and read his works aloud to them for their judgment :⁶ and he was extremely patient of their observations and corrections. Like some other of our English poets, he read so ill, that his productions suffered greatly by his delivery ; a circumstance in which he resembled Congreve,⁷ Thomson, and Goldsmith, as on the other hand, Lee, Rowe,⁸ and Pope,⁹

⁵ The Earl of Dorset read DON SEBASTIAN twice over, before it was acted. See also Dryden's Letter to Tonsen, dated *Wednesday Morning*, desiring him to make a transcript of the Fourth *Æneid*, for the purpose of showing it to some of his friends ; and another, dated *Friday Forenoon*, desiring him to carry the manuscript translation of the Seventh *Æneid* to Sir Robert Howard, that he might peruse it at leisure in the country. Congreve reviewed the whole *Æneid* in manuscript, and compared it with the original. " I shall never (says our author,) be ashamed to own, that this excellent young man has shewed me many faults, which I have endcavoured to correct."

⁶ See his Note on the Ninth *Æneid*, v. 1095 : " When I read this *Æneid* to many of my friends, in company together, most of them quarreled at the word *falsified*, [his ample shield—is *falsified*—] as an innovation in our language."

⁷ " Southerne (says Dr. Johnson,) used to relate of one comedy, probably of this, [THE OLD BACHELOR,] that when Congreve read it to the players, he pronounced it so wretchedly, that they had almost rejected it."—LIFE OF CONGREVE.

⁸ Rowe's voice was so uncommonly sweet, his observations so lively, and his manner so engaging, that his friends delighted in his conversation.

⁹ Pope's voice was so naturally musical, that South-

emulating the sweetness and skill of Virgil in the recital of his verses,¹ were highly distinguished for a correct and animated enunciation. "When Dryden, our first great master of verse and harmony, brought his play of *AMPHITRYON* to the Stage, I heard him (says Cibber,) give it his first reading to the Actors; in which, though it is true he delivered the plain sense of every period, yet the whole was in so cold, so flat, and unaffecting a manner, that I am afraid of not being believed, when I affirm it.² On the contrary, Lee, far his

erne used to call him *the little Nightingale*. Remarks on the Life and Writings of Swift, by John, Earl of Orrery, p. 225.

Mr. Spence having asked Pope, whether he had ever learned any thing of musick, he replied, "Never; but I had naturally a very good ear, and have often judged rightly of the best compositions in musick, by the force of that."

¹ Donatus, in his Life of Virgil, quotes Seneca, as saying—that Julius Montanus, a poet who lived to the time of Tiberius, and in his youth had heard Virgil pronounce some of his own verses, used to speak of his recitation with the highest praise.—"Pronunclabat autem maximâ cum suavitate, et lenociniis miris. Seneca tradidit, Julium Montanum poetam solitum dicere, involaturum se quædam Virgilio, si vocem possit, et os, et hypocrisim: eosdem enim versus, eo pronuntiante, bene sonare; sine illo, inarescere, quasi mutos."—Seneca (EPISTOL. 122,) has mentioned Montanus, and quoted some of his verses; but the passage alluded to by Donatus is not now extant in Seneca's works.

² Life of Colley Cibber, 8vo. 1740, p. 95.—See also THE CENSOR, (by Theobald.) No. 9, 12mo. 1717:

inferior in poetry, was so pathetick a reader of his own scenes, that I have been informed by an actor who was present, that while Lee was reading to Major Mohun at a rehearsal, Mohun, in the warmth of his admiration, threw down his part, and said, ' Unless I were able to *play* it as well as you *read* it, to what purpose should I undertake it ?'—Rowe was so excellent a reciter of his compositions, that Mrs. Oldfield used to say—that she had no occasion for any other *study*, than hearing him read her part in any of his plays.—Of Goldsmith's deficiency in this respect, I can

" It is very odd, what some of Mr. Dryden's friends have often repeated of him, that there was no man who read poetry with a worse grace than himself; so that a stranger would have hardly believed him the author of one tolerable good verse."

If we may credit a ballad written to ridicule the words and musick of the opera entitled ALBION AND ALBANUS, (probably by some partisan of Shaftesbury,) Dryden had no ear for musick. These are two stanzas of it :

" Bayes, thou would'st have thy skill thought universal,

" *Though thy dull ear be to musick untrue ;*

" Then whilst we strive to confute the Rehearsal,

" Pr'ythee, leave thrashing of Monsieur Grabu.

" Leave making operas, and writing lyrics,

" *Till thou hast ears, and can alter thy strain ;*

" Stick to thy talent of bold panegyricks,

" *And still remember the breathing the vein."*

We learn from the MENAGIANA, (i. 312. Amst. 1762,) that the great French dramattick poet, Corneille, read his own verses as ill as Dryden.

speak from my own knowledge : for several years ago I was in company with him and Dr. Johnson ; and after dinner, the conversation happening to turn on this subject, Goldsmith maintained that a poet was more likely to pronounce verse with accuracy and spirit, than other men. He was immediately called upon to support his argument by an example ; a request with which he readily complied ; and he repeated the first stanza of the ballad beginning with the words—" At Upton on the hill,"—with such false emphasis, by marking the word *on* very strongly, that all the company agreed he had by no means established his position.—Thomson read so ill, that Mr. Dodgington, his patron, once snatched a poem out of his hands, while he was reading it, saying, " You booby, you do not understand your own verses."^a

Of Dryden's petty habits, a few have been transmitted to us. He was so great a taker of snuff, that, as I have heard from a very respectable lady now living, whose father, when a boy, had seen him, no box, however capacious, could serve him : he therefore carried a copious supply

^a From a paper concerning Thomson, communicated to Dr. Johnson by Sir David Dalrymple, Bart. (Lord Hailes,) from the information of Lady Murray, a near relation of Lord Binning, in whose family Thomson lived for some time.

of snuff loose in his waistcoat-pocket ;³ and he was so curious respecting it, that he generally prepared it himself.⁴

We are told that Michael Angelo, while he was employed on his famous piece, of which the subject is the Last Judgment, took no kind of sustenance but bread and wine ; lest the fumes of animal food should cloud his fancy, and abate the fire of his imagination. On the same principle,

³ Price Eugene is said to have carried his snuff in the same manner ; but his pocket was lined with tin.

⁴ Key to THE REHEARSAL. See also " The Reasons of Mr. Bayes's changing his religion," Part I. " The next that comes upon the stage is the melancholy Spaniard ; - - - and the truth on't is, though I ought to have shewn him some civility, *for that divine, that immortal, invention of making snuff, yet,*" &c.

So in a Satire on the Poets, by Prior, written about the year 1689 :

- " Sidley, indeed, and Rochester might write,
- " For their own credit, and their friends' delight ;
- " Shewing how far they could the rest outdo,
- " As in their fortunes, in their writing too :
- " But should *drudge* Dryden this example take,
- " And *ABSALOMs* for empty glory make,
- " *He'd soon perceive his income scarce enough*
- " *To feed his nostrils with inspiring snuff :*
- " Starving for meat, not surfeiting on praise,
- " *He'd find his brains as barren as his bays.*"

See also p. 490, n. 8. ; and Dryden's Letter to Tonson, written about Dec. 1697.

Dryden, as Dr. Lamotte⁵ was informed by a person of credit who was acquainted with our author, when he was about to engage in any considerable work, used to purge his body and cleanse his head by physick ; and Lamotte's account, as well as the supposed allusion to this practice in *THE REHEARSAL*, derive some confirmation from a letter written to Jacob Tonson by our poet in the country, in which he desires a large provision of *damascenes* to be made for his own use.

He was fond of fishing ;⁶ an amusement, which for those who, like Dryden, love quiet and retirement,⁷ has very strong attractions. To enjoy this pastime, in his excursions to Wiltshire, where, as we have seen, he had a small estate, he sometimes

⁵ Essay upon Poetry and Painting, p. 103. 8vo. 1730.

⁶ See his Letter to Tonson, dated Sep. 13, [1695.]

⁷ " I am not (says he, in the Dedication of *AURENG-ZEBE*.) formed to praise a Court, who admire and covet nothing but the easiness and quiet of retirement. I naturally withdraw my sight from a precipice ; and, admit the prospect be never so large and goodly, can take no pleasure even in looking on the downfal, though I am secure from the danger. Methinks, there is something of a malignant joy in that excellent description of Lucretius : '*Suave mari magno*,' &c. I am sure, his master, Epicurus, and my better master, Cowley, preferred the solitude of a garden, and the conversation of a friend, to any consideration,—so much as a regard,—of those unhappy people whom, in our own wrong, we call *THE GREAT*. . . . I can be contented with an humbler station in the Temple of Virtue, than to be set on the pinnacle of it."

visited Mr. Jones, of Ramsbury, in that county, a gentleman whose liking to this diversion induced him to collect a fishing-party every summer,* into which D'Urfey, the poet, was admitted ; though Dryden held his piscatory powers as cheap as his poetical ; a circumstance to which Fenton alludes in his very elegant Epistle to Mr. Lambard :

- " By long experience, D'Urfey may no doubt
- " Ensnare a gudgeon, or sometimes a trout ;
- " Yet Dryden once exclaim'd, in partial spite,
- " *He fish !*—because the man attempts to write."⁸

Spence, who lived in great intimacy with Pope,

* Warton's Pope, vol. vii. p. 108.

⁸ The last letter written by our author to Mrs. Steward, —but three weeks before his death,—shows that Fenton's conjecture in the following lines of the same Epistle, was almost literally true :

- " Be this their care, who studious of renown,
- " Toil up th' Aonian steep, to reach the crown :
- " Suffice it me, that, having spent my prime
- " In picking epithets and yoking rhyme,
- " To steadier rule my thoughts I now compose,
- " And prize ideas clad in honest prose.
- " Old DRYDEN, emulous of Cæsar's praise,
- " Cover'd his baldness with immortal bays ;
- " And Death, *perhaps*, to spoil poetick sport,
- " *Unkindly cut an Alexandrine short.*
- " His ear had a more lasting itch than mine,
- " For the smooth cadence of a golden line."

Garth, in the Preface to his Ovid, published in the same year, (1717,) has nearly the same thought as that of Fenton in the eighth of these verses. Alluding to our

informs us, that he never was seen to laugh.⁹ In this respect he differed widely from Dryden, who has himself told us, that "the merry philosopher was more to his humour than the melancholick."¹ To this natural cheerfulness we may ascribe that vivacity which is found in all his writings, and displayed itself even when he was most depressed. This happy disposition of mind was, however, sometimes disturbed and ruffled by the importunity of his bookseller; on whom, during the latter period of his life, he depended for a considerable part of his subsistence, and whose demands for what, in the technical language of the printing-house, is called *Copy*, he was not always able to satisfy. His bookseller, soon after he settled in London, was Henry Herringman; of whom I know no more, than that he was the principal dealer in poetry at that time, and that he continued to issue out Dryden's plays and other compositions till the year 1679. It has been said, that when Jacob Tonson purchased the copy of the first play of Dryden that he published, he was so poor, that he was obliged to borrow the purchase-money, which was twenty pounds, from Abel Swalle, another bookseller of that day, who advanced that sum on being admitted to a moiety of the profits; and that the play having a successful

author's baldness, and his increasing reputation to the latest period of his life, he happily observes, that the falling off of his hair only showed his laurels the more.

⁹ ANECDOTES.

¹ Vol. ii. p. 200.

ale, Tonson was thus enabled to purchase the copies of our author's other works on his own account. The play alluded to was *TROILUS AND CRESSIDA*, which was published in 1679, for Tonson and Swalle. To this anecdote, for which no authority has been given, I know not what credit is due. Tonson, before he published *TROILUS AND CRESSIDA*, was sufficiently rich to purchase some of the plays of Otway and Tate. He was the second son of Jacob Tonson, chirurgion, and citizen of London, who died in the year 1668. By his father's last will, which was made July 10, in that year, and proved in the following November,^a he and his elder brother Richard,^b (as well as their three sisters,) were, each, entitled to a sum of one hundred pounds, to be paid in Gray's-Inn Hall, on their arriving at the age of twenty-one. With this capital (which may be estimated as equal to £.300. at this day,) he commenced book-

^a PREROG. OFF. Henr. qu. 147.

^b Richard Tonson had a shop within Gray's-Inn Gate, in Gray's-Inn Lane. Jacob Tonson's shop for many years was distinguished by the sign of the Judge's Head, and was situated in Chancery Lane, very near Fleet-street. About the year 1697 he removed to Gray's Inn where he remained (probably in consequence of his brother's death, and during the minority of his nephew,) till about 1712, when he again removed to a house opposite Catharine-street, in the Strand: and on his coming nearer the region of wit, he exchanged his old sign for that of the head of Shakspeare, whose plays he had published in 1709, and who was then *at length* become extremely popular.

seller, being admitted a freeman of the Stationers' Company on the 20th of December, 1677. His brother, Richard, engaged in the same business in the preceding year.

From the letters which passed between Tonson and Dryden, we find that they had occasionally some slight bickerings; which, however, do not seem to have produced any lasting ill will on either side. Booksellers, as the subordinate agents of literature, might be expected to possess some of that softness of manners which letters generally impart to those who cultivate the liberal arts; but by him who is to live by the sale of books, I fear, a book is considered merely as an article of trade; and the most learned or ingenious treatise ever written, when viewed in a commercial light, too often appears only a volume consisting of a certain number of sheets of paper, by the sale of which profit is to be made. I may add, that the conduct of traders in general, in the last century, was less liberal, and their manners more rugged, than at present; and hence we find Dryden sometimes speaking of Tonson with a degree of asperity that confirms an anecdote communicated to Dr. Johnson by Dr. King of Oxford; to whom Lord Bolingbroke related, "that one day, when he visited Dryden, they heard, as they were conversing,

* Lord Bolingbroke had early commenced a poet; having, in 1697, when he was Mr. St. John, furnished Granville with a Prologue to his *HEROICK LOVE*. In the same year he wrote some encomiastick verses on Dryden, which were prefixed to his translation of Virgil:

another person entering the house. 'This,' said Dryden, 'is Tonson: you will take care not to depart before he goes away: for I have not completed the sheet which I promised him; and if you leave me unprotected, I shall suffer all the rudeness to which his resentment can prompt his tongue.'

On another occasion, Tonson having refused to advance him a sum of money for a work on which he was employed, he sent a second messenger to the bookseller, with a very satirical triplet; adding, "Tell the dog, that he who wrote these lines, can write more." These descriptive verses, which had the desired effect, by some means got abroad in manuscript; and, not long after Dryden's death, were inserted in *FACTION DISPLAYED*, a satirical poem, supposed to have been written by William Shippen, (whom Pope has transmitted to posterity under the appellation of—*downright* Shippen,) which, from its virulent abuse of the opposite party, was extremely popular among the Tories. About the year 1700 was formed the *KIT-KAT CLUB*,⁶ which seems to have grown out of another

and soon afterwards he published a long Ode of little merit, entitled *ALMAHIDE*.

⁶ This Society is said to have first met at an obscure house in Shire-Lane, and consisted of thirty-nine distinguished noblemen and gentlemen, zealously attached to the protestant succession in the House of Hanover; among whom were the Dukes of Somerset, Richmond, Grafton, Devonshire, and Marlborough, and (after the

convivial society called **THE KNIGHTS OF THE TOAST**, of whom some account will be given in a subsequent page. Tonson being Secretary to the Kit-Kat Club, which was entirely composed of

accession of George I.) the Duke of Newcastle; the Earls of Dorset, Sunderland, Manchester, Wharton, and Kingston; Lords Halifax and Somers; Sir Robert Walpole, Vanbrugh, Congreve, Granville, Addison, Garth, Maynwaring, Stepney, and Walsh. The Club is supposed to have derived its name from *Christopher Katt*, a pastry-cook, who kept the house where they dined, and excelled in making mutton-pyes, which always formed a part of their bill of fare. In the **SPECTATOR**, No. 9, they are said to have derived their title, not from the maker of the pye, but the pye itself. The fact is, that on account of its excellence, it was called a *Kit-Kat*, as we now say—a *Sandwich*. So, in the Prologue to the **REFORMED WIFE**, a comedy, 1700:

“Often, for change, the meanest things are good:
 “Thus, though the town all delicacies afford,
 “A *Kit-Kat* is a supper for a lord.”

The custom of *toasting* ladies in regular succession after dinner, had commenced not long before. On the *toasting-glasses* of this Club verses were inscribed, written in 1703, by Lord Halifax, Congreve, Granville, Addison, Garth, and other members, in praise of the most admired beauties of that day; many of which are preserved in Dryden's *Miscellanies*, (vol. v. edit. 1716.) and in other collections. This circumstance gave rise to an Epigram, the author of which, (perhaps Arbuthnot,) not having quite so much respect for the ladies thus celebrated by their panegyrists, rejected the etymology already mentioned, and that given by Edward Ward,—(that the Society derived its appellation from a person of the Christian

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the most distinguished Whigs, could not escape the notice of a Tory Satirist, who gave vent to his spleen against him in the following lines ; by which he has preserved a description that Dryden probably never intended to be transmitted to posterity :

" Now the Assembly to adjourn prepar'd,
 " When BIBLIOPOLLO from behind appear'd,
 " As well described by th' old satirick bard ;

}

name of *Christopher*, who lived at the sign of the *Cat and Fiddle*,) and has *chosen* to suggest another origin, not less ludicrous than that furnished by the facetious historian of the Clubs of London :

" Whence deathless KIT-CAT took its name,
 " Few criticks can unriddle ;
 " Some say, from pastry-cook it came,
 " And some, from *Cat and Fiddle*.
 " From no trim beaus its name it boasts,
 " Gray Statesmen, or green Wits ;
 " But from this pell-mell pack of *Toasts*
 " Of old *Cats* and young *Kits*."

Dr. King, however, in his *Art of Cookery*, has this line :

" Immortal made, as *Kit Kat* by his pyes ;"—

and the younger Tonson, in his *Will*, mentioning this Club, writes it *Kitt-Katt* ; which, as the learned Martinus Scriblerus observes in the sixth volume of his *HALLUCINATIONES ETYMOLOGICÆ*, strongly corroborates the more *polite* account of its origin given in the former part of this note. Martin, indeed, expresseth very serious doubts, whether libations were ever made to the healths of any ancient ladies, (here denominated *old Cats*,) in this gay symposium.

¹ See Dryden's Letter, dated Feb, 23, 1699-1700 ; and the Note.

- "With leering looks, bull-faced, and freckled fair,
 "With two left legs,¹ and Judas-colour'd hair,
 "And frowzy pores, that taint the ambient air.
 "Sweating and puffing for a while he stood,
 "And then broke forth in this insulting mood:
 "I am the touchstone of all modern wit;
 "Without my stamp in vain your poets write:
 "Those only purchase ever-living fame,
 "That in my MISCELLANY plant their name.

¹ I suppose, by this epithet Dryden meant, that ~~Tonson~~ ^{who} was as awkward in the movement of his legs, as he is, ~~—~~ ^{So} accidentally uses his *left hand* instead of his right. ~~—~~
 also Pope, in the late editions of the DUNCIAD:

"And *left-legg'd* Jacob seems to emulate."

On which line he has this singular note:

"Milton of the motion of the swan;

— — — — — *rows*

His [Her] state with oary feet—

and Dryden of *another's* [motion],—*with two left legs.*"

Who could suppose, that this *other* was the very person mentioned in Pope's text?—But the fact is, that this ~~p~~ ^{son} sage received various changes in the different editions, ~~and~~ ^{as} the epithet *left-legg'd* was not inserted till after old ~~Jacob~~ ^{and} Tonson's death. In the original edition of 1728, without ~~notes~~ ^{notes}, the lines run thus:

- "Swift as a bard the bailiff leaves behind,
 "He left huge Lintot, and outstripp'd the wind.
 "As when a dab-chick waddles through the copse,
 "On legs and wings, and flies, and wades, and hops;
 "So lab'ring on with shoulders, hands, and head,
 "Wide as windmill all his figure spread,
 "With steps unequal Lintot urg'd the race,
 "And seem'd to emulate great Jacob's pace."

" Nor therefore think that I can bring no aid,
 " Because I follow a mechanick trade;—
 " I'll print your pamphlets, and your rumours spread." }

In the edition of 1729, the last couplet is thus exhibited :

" *With legs expanded, Bernard urg'd the race,*
 " *And seem'd to emulate great Jacob's pace.*"

And so it stands in the Quarto Edition printed by the author, in 1735, with his other works. But Jacob Tonson, with whom Pope lived on friendly terms and corresponded, having died in 1736, in the edition of 1742, and all subsequent, the lines run thus :

" *With arms expanded Bernard rows his state,*
 " *And left-legg'd Jacob seems to emulate.*"

If the various editions of Pope's works were carefully collated, similar alterations would be found in almost every page.

The *unequal pace* of our author's bookseller arose, perhaps, from a circumstance mentioned by Rowe in his Dialogue between Tonson and Congreve, in imitation of Horace's—*Donec gratus eram*, Lib. III. Ode ix. ; which, furnishes us with some other particularities of this celebrated modern Trypho :

TONSON. While at my house in Fleet-street once you lay,
 How merrily, dear Sir, time pass'd away !
 While I partook your wine, your wit, and mirth,
 I was the happiest creature on God's yearth.*

CONGREVE. While in your early days of reputation,
 You for blue garters had not such a passion ;
 While yet you did not use, as now your trade is,
 To drink with noble lords, and toast their ladies,

* Tonson (Sen.) his dialect.—*Orig. Note.*

" I am the founder of your lov'd KIT-KAT,*

" A Club that gave direction to the State ;

Thou, Jacob Tonson, were, to my conceiving,
The cheerfullest, best, honest fellow living.

TONSON. I'm in with Captain Vanbrugh at the present,
A most *sweet-natur'd* gentleman, and pleasant :
He writes your comedies, draws schemes and models,
And builds Dukes' houses upon very odd hills :
For him, so much I dote on him, that I,
If I were sure to go to heaven, would die.

CONGREVE. Temple and Dalaval are now my party,
Men that are *tam Mercurio* both *quam Marti* ;
And though for them I shall scarce go to heaven,
Yet I can drink with them six days in seven.

TONSON. What if from Van's dear arms I should retire,
And once more warm my *bunnianst* at your fire ;
If I to Bow-street ‡ should invite you home,
And set a bed up in my dining-room,
Tell me, dear Mr. Congreve, would you come ?

CONGREVE. Though the gay sailor, and the gentle
knight, §
Were ten times more my joy and heart's delight ;
Though civil persons they, you ruder were
And had more humours than a dancing bear ;
Yet for your sake I'd bid them both adieu,
And live and die, dear 'Cob, with only you.

* Ward, in his " History of Clubs," as well as Mr Shippen, says, that Jacob Tonson was the *founder* of this Club.

† Jacob's term for his corns.

‡ Where at this time he had a printing-house.

§ Sir Richard Temple, soon afterwards created Lord Cobham.

" 'Twas there we first instructed all our youth,
 " To talk profane, and laugh at sacred truth ;'
 " We taught them how to *toast*, and rhyme, and bite,
 " To sleep away the day, and drink away the night.—
 " Some this fantastick speech approved, some sneer'd ;
 " The wight grew cholerick, and disappear'd."

Jacob Tonson, however plain in his appearance, of which this satirical description may be supposed to have been a caricature, was, I believe, a worthy man,^a and was not only respected as an honest and opulent trader, but, after Dryden's death,

All Rowe's early plays, except the *AMBITIOUS STEP-MOTHER*, were printed for Jacob Tonson ; but these verses, which appeared in a small collection of his poems, in 1714, (if not before) were printed for Edmund Curll ; and *JANE SHORE* was published by Lintot in 1713, and *LADY JANE GRAY* in 1715, by the same bookseller. It should seem, therefore, that some disagreement had taken place between Rowe and Tonson. Jacob probably was not satisfied with the part which he sustains in this dialogue.

^a Addison told Bishop Berkeley, that he had been in danger of losing his religion by living with the Whigs.

^b According to Dunton, in his *LIFE AND ERRORS*, 8vo. 1705, good sense, frankness, and independence, were the striking features of his character : " He was (says Dunton,) bookseller to the famous Dryden, and is himself a very good judge of persons and authors : and as there is no body more competently qualified to give their opinion of another, so there is none who does it with a more severe degree of exactness, or with less partiality ; for, to do Mr. Tonson justice, he speaks his mind upon all occasions, and *will flatter nobody*."

lived in familiar intimacy with some of the most considerable persons of the early part of this century.¹ By his success in trade he had acquired a sufficient sum to purchase, about that time,

¹ Even the proud Duke of Somerset, Thomas Pelham Duke of Newcastle, and many other noblemen, corresponded with Jacob Tonson, and wrote to him with great familiarity and kindness. He appears to have been the keystone of the Kit-Kat Club, as may be collected from the following extracts from letters addressed to him. June 22d, 1703, the Duke of Somerset tells him—"Our Club is dissolved, till you revive it again; which we are impatient of." In the same month and year, Vanbrugh, who appears to have had great kindness for Tonson, and corresponded with him for above twenty years, writing to him at Amsterdam, says,—“In short, the Kitt-Catt wants you much more than you ever can do them. Those who remain in town are in great desire of waiting on you at Barn-Elmes; not that they have finished their pictures neither; though, to excuse them as well as myself, Sir Godfrey has been most in fault. The fool has got a country-house near Hampton-Court, and is so busy in fitting it up, (to receive no body,) that there's no getting him to work.” Again, July 10, 1703:—"The *Kitt-Catt* too will never meet without you: so you see, here's a general stagnation for want of you."

Vanbrugh wrote to him with great kindness, Nov. 5, 1719 (a Mon' Mon' Tonson, chez Mon' Coustelier, Libraire, a Paris): "I went the next day to Claremont, where you may imagine there was much talk about you; and I do assure you, with no small regard and affection from every body. Mr. Spence was there, who gave me a very agreeable and friendly account of you, and join'd

an estate near Ledbury, in Herefordshire. In the year 1703 he went to Holland, for the purpose of

very heartily in clinking round your health and your return."

So again, Nov. 29, 1719:—"One seldome hears you named, since the good fortune that has attended you there, [at Paris,] but the question is started, how it will operate upon you in your way of living; and various opinions I observe about it. What my own has been, you'll hear when you come over; but I observe in your letter one strong symptome of my being right; since you are so far from forgetting your old mistress, Barnes, that you are inclined to compliment her in the spring with £.500. for a new petticoat. For my part, I think she deserves it, for the pleasures she has given you; and I heartily wish her well, for those she has spared me."

Again, Feb. 18, 1719-20:—"Though your nephew tells me, you'll be soon here, I take it for granted you may meet with such delays as may give you time to receive an answer to the last letter I had from you; which so pleased the Duke of Newcastle, that he took it from me to shew the Duchess, Mrs. Pelham, &c. and said, he would write three sides of a sheet in answer to it, and then give it to me, to fill up the fourth."

Again, August 12, 1725:—"From Woodstock we went to Lord Cobham's, seeing Middleton-Stony by the way, and eating a cheerful cold loaf at a very humble ale-house: I think the best meal I ever eat, *except the first supper in the kitchen at Barnes.*"

Some years before, this Club seems to have been dissolved, or died away. "You may believe me, (says Vanbrugh in the same letter,) when I tell you, you were often talked of, both during the journey and at Stowe; and our former *Kitt-Katt* days were remember'd with pleasure: we were one night reckoning who were left,

procuring paper and getting engravings made for the splendid edition of *Cæsar's Commentaries*, which he published under the care of Dr. Clarke in 1712 : perhaps the most magnificent work that has been issued from the English press. Before he went abroad, he had acquired a villa at Barn-elms,⁴ in Surrey, about six miles from London ; which he adorned with the portraits of the Kit-Kat Club, painted by Kneller,⁵ on canvas somewhat larger

and both Lord Carlisle and Cobham expressed a great desire of having one meeting next winter, if you came to town,—not as a Club, but old friends that *have been* of a Club, and the best Club that ever met."

A paragraph in a letter from G. Stepney to Tonson, dated Vienna, March 24, 1703, ascertains the hours they kept : " My hearty affections to the Kit-Cat : I often wish it were in my power to make one with you *at three in the morning*."

⁴ It consisted only of a house and garden, held by lease from the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's.

⁵ The room where these portraits were intended to be hung, (in which the Club often dined,) not being sufficiently lofty for *half-length* pictures, that circumstance is said to have been the occasion of a shorter canvas being used, which is now denominated a *Kit-kat*, and is sufficiently long to admit a hand. The canvas for a *Kit-kat* is thirty-six inches long, and twenty-eight wide. It appears from the will of the younger Jacob Tonson, which was made Aug. 16th, and proved Dec. 6th, 1735, (PRE. OFF. Ducie, qu. 257.) that he was then by the grant and assignment of his uncle entitled to this Collection of Pictures, after his uncle's death ; and that the testator had not long before erected a new room at Barn-elms, in which

than a three-quarters, and less than a half-length : a size which has ever since been denominated a Kit-kat from this circumstance. In 1719 he made an excursion to Paris, where he spent several months, and was fortunate enough to gain a considerable sum by adventuring in the Mississippi scheme. In consequence of his attachment to the Whigs, he obtained in January 1719-20, probably by the patronage of the Duke of Newcastle and Secretary Craggs,⁶ a grant⁷ to himself and his nephew, Jacob Tonson, junior, (who was the son of his elder brother, Richard,) of the office of Stationer, Bookbinder, Bookseller, and Printer, to some of the principal publick Boards and great Offices,⁸ for the term of forty years ; and not long afterwards (1722) he assigned and made over the

the Kit-kat portraits were then hung. They were painted by Sir Godfrey Kneller, chiefly in the reign of Queen Anne, and are all of the same size, except that of the painter. Tonson's portrait is one of the set. Between 1732 and 1736, Faber made mezzotinto prints of the whole Collection.

⁶ Vanbrugh, in a letter to Jacob Tonson, written, Nov. 29, 1719, (two months only before this grant,) says, " I shewed Mr. Secretary Craggs what you writ to him. He returns you his compliments, and seems much disposed to be your friend and servant." Mr. Craggs had been made Secretary of State about eight months before the date of this letter.

⁷ Pat. 6 Geo. I. p. 3. n. 17.

⁸ The Post-Office, and War-Office, the offices of the Treasurer of the Navy, and the Commissioners for Stamp-duties, &c.

whole benefit of this grant to his nephew; who, in 1733, obtained from Sir Robert Walpole a further grant of the same employment for forty years more,⁹ to commence at the expiration of the former term: a very lucrative appointment, which was enjoyed by the Tonson family, or their assigns, till the month of January, 1800. From about the year 1720, the elder Tonson seems to have transferred his business to his nephew; and lived principally on his estate in Herefordshire, till 1736, when he died, probably about eighty years old.¹ On his

⁹ Pat. 6 Geo. II. p. 1. n. 4.

¹ March 18, 1735-6.—In one of the Stationers' Books I found the following entry:—"5^o Junii, 1670. Jacob Tonson, sonne of Jacob Tonson, late of Holborne, Barber Chyrurgeon, deceased, hath put him selfe an apprentice to Thomas Basset, for eight years from this day."—As, by his father's will, his mother was directed to bind him an apprentice to some trade at the age of *fourteen*, it may be presumed that he was born in 1656.—In THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE he is stated to have died worth only *forty thousand pounds*: but he probably possessed double that sum.—Soon after his successful adventure in the Mississippi scheme, he wrote to his friend, Sir John Vanbrugh, to look out for a purchase for him; and Sir John proposed one to him, for which *thirty thousand pounds* were to have been paid. From his will, which was made Dec. 2, 1735, and proved April 9, 1736, (PRE. OFF. Derby, qu. 91.) it appears that he had estates in Gloucestershire and Herefordshire. Even supposing him to have quitted business about 1720,—by near fifty years traffick, with a great accession from the French funds, he must have acquired a much larger sum than that attributed to him soon after his death.

death-bed he is reported to have said, "I wish I had the world to begin again;" and having been asked—why he expressed such a wish, to have replied, "because then I should have died worth a hundred thousand pounds; whereas now I die worth only eighty thousand pounds:" but the circumstances in which he died, and the situation of his family, render this anecdote extremely improbable, and worthy of little credit.^a Only four months before, his nephew had died; and even he, of whom perhaps this story was originally told, had no occasion to wish for rejuvenescence, to obtain the sum which is here stated as the completion of human felicity; for according to the printed accounts of that period, he was at the time of his death worth an hundred thousand pounds.^b For what purpose then could the elder Tonson wish for any additional wealth? He had

^a Sir David Dalrymple, from whom I derive this anecdote, was a very curious inquirer, and extremely accurate in his researches: but he has merely mentioned this, and another traditional story, which has been shewn to be without foundation, (see p. 320,) as tales that were current about forty years ago, and were worth examination and inquiry, without vouching for their authenticity.

^b GENT. MAG. for Nov. 1735. He died at Barnes, Nov. 15, 1735. His will, which was made, August 16, 1735, and proved Dec. 6th following, (PRE. OFF. DUCIE, qu. 257.) filled twenty-seven pages, and was all written by himself; and shows him not only to have abounded in wealth, but to have been a prudent, just, and worthy man. He is therefore very unlikely to have expressed any such wish as that above mentioned. After having devised

no children of his own ; and the children of his nephew were all most amply provided for by their father's will. Seventeen days after the death of that nephew, (Dec. 2, 1735,) old Jacob Tonson made his will ; in which he confirmed a settlement that he had made on him, (probably at the time of his marriage,) and appointed his great-nephew, Jacob Tonson, the eldest son of the former Jacob, his executor and residuary legatee. This must have been an immense accession to what he already had derived from his father ; who devised all his estates in Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, and Worcestershire, in what is called strict settlement, to his sons, Jacob, Richard, and Samuel, successively ; and the whole benefit of his patent between the two elder, whom he also

his estates in Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, and Worcestershire, and bequeathed no less a sum than thirty-four thousand pounds to his three daughters and his younger son Samuel, and disposed of his patent, he mentions his uncle, old Jacob Tonson, to whom he leaves fifty guineas for mourning ; but knowing his love of quiet and retirement, he says, he would not burthen him with the office of executor of his will. He however recommends his family to his uncle's care, and exhorts all his children to remember their duty to their superiours and their inferiours ; tenderly adding—" *And so GOD bless you all !*" This is not the language of a man whose heart was inordinately set on gain. It appears from his will, that he was a bookseller, bookbinder, and stationer, all which business was carried on in his house ; and that he was also a printer, in partnership with J. Watts. The elder Jacob probably also carried on all these several occupations.

made his residuary legatees. Richard, though a partner with his elder brother, lived principally on his estate near Windsor, where he was so much beloved and respected, that the electors of that borough almost compelled him to represent them in parliament; an honour which he enjoyed at the time of his death. Jacob, who is called by Dr. Johnson, "the late amiable Mr. Tonson," after having carried on the business of a bookseller with great liberality, and credit to himself, for above thirty years, died without issue, in 1767; and Mr. Steevens afterwards honoured his memory with a characteristick, and, I believe, a very just eulogium.* He was the last commercial name of a

* This amiable man carried on his trade for many years in the same shop which had been possessed by his father and great uncle, opposite Catharine-street in the Strand; but some years before his death removed to a new house on the other side of the way, near Catharine-street, where he died, March 31, 1767. Though his younger brother, Richard, survived him a few years, (dying at Water-Oakley, near Bray, in Berkshire, Oct. 9, 1772,) Mr. Jacob Tonson may be considered as the last commercial name of this family; Richard having become a country gentleman, and a Member of Parliament. His father by his will directed his estate at Water-Oakley to be sold, and the produce to be considered as part of his personal property; but it came into the hands of his second son, Richard, either by agreement with his family, or by purchase.

† Advertisement prefixed to his first edition of Shakespeare's Plays, in ten volumes, 1773.

family connected with English literature for almost a hundred years.

Since the death of Dryden, nearly a century has elapsed ; during the latter part of which period his reputation has greatly increased, in common with that of our other most famous poets ; who for the last fifty years have been more read, and are now much better understood, than they were by our ancestors. Some of the most distinguished wits of Queen Anne's time, however, seem to have thought themselves obscured by the shade of his laurels ; and for a few years, endeavoured to depreciate him. Old Jacob Tonson informed Mr. Spence, that Addison was so eager to be the first name in modern literature, that, with Steele to assist him, he used to decry Dryden, as far as he could, while Pope and Congreve defended him ;⁶ and in this unworthy attempt, as we learn from Dennis,⁷ Addison and his followers were joined by

⁶ ANECDOTES.

⁷ In 1715, Dennis wrote a letter to Jacob Tonson, " on the conspiracy against the reputation of Dryden," which he afterwards printed in a Collection of his Letters, in 1721 ; but Pope having subscribed to that and another work of his, he was induced (as he tells us in his " Remarks on the DUNCIAD," pp. 39, 40.) " to strike out several severe reflections against him, which were scattered up and down in those Letters : " and Pope afterwards thanked him by letter, (May 3, 1721,) for the omissions which he had made in his favour ; adding—" I sincerely join with you in the desire that not the least traces may remain of that difference between us, which indeed I am

a numerous band. It is painful to observe, in all times, how much men's judgments are warped by

sorry for."—As the ravings of Dennis against this great poet can detract nothing from his reputation, his Letter relative to Dryden is here printed from the original, without any mutilation. The passages in the Italic character are those which were omitted by Dennis in his book :

" Sir,

" When I had the good fortune to meet you in the city, it was with concern that I heard from you, of the attempt to lessen the reputation of Mr. Dryden ; and 'tis with indignation that I have since learnt that that attempt has chiefly been carried on by small poets, who ungratefully strive to eclipse the glory of a great man, from whom alone they derive their own feint lustre. But that eclipse will be as momentary as that of the sun was lately. The reputation of Mr. Dryden will soon break out again in its full lustre, and theirs will disappear. Upon hearing of this attempt, I reflected with some amazement that I should have gott the reputation of an ill-natur'd man, by exposing the absurditys of living authours, and authours for the most part of a very moderate meritt, tho' I have always done it openly and fairly, and upon just provocations ; and that these should attack the reputation of a great man deceas'd, who now can make noe defence for himself, and upon whom they fawn'd while living, and should yet escape uncensur'd.

" But when I heard that this attempt to lessen Mr. Dryden's reputation was done in favour of *little Pope, that diminutive of Parnassus and of humanity*, it was impossible to expresse to what a height my indignation and disdain were rais'd. Good GOD ! was there ever any nation, in which, I will not say a false tast, for we never had a true

the violence of party. Prior, who set out a zealous Whig, not contented with the ridicule which, in

one, but in which a wrong sense, and a fatal delusion, so generally prevail'd? For have not too many of us lately appear'd to condemn every thing that is great and glorious, and to prize and exalt every thing that is base and infamous? Have not too many made it plain to the world by a manifest execrable choice, that they preferr weakness to power, folly to wisdom, poverty to wealth, infamy to glory, submission to victory, slavery to liberty, idolatry to religion; the Duke of O[rmond] to the Duke of M[arlborough]; the empty Pretender to Royall George, our only rightfull King; and *the little Mr. Pope to the illustrious Mr. Dryden?*

" If I appear a *little* too warm, I hope you will excuse my affection for the memory, and my zeal for the reputation, of my departed friend, whom I infinitely esteem'd when living, for the solidity of his thought, for the spring and the warmth, and the beautifull turn of it; for the power, and variety, and fulnesse of his harmony; for the purity, the perspicuity, the energy of his expression; and, whenever these great qualities are requir'd, for the pomp, and solemnity, and majesty, of his style. *But Pope is the very reverse of all this: he scarce ever thought once solidly, but is an empty eternall babbler: and as his thoughts almost always are false or trifling, his expression is too often obscure, ambiguous, and unclearly. He has indeed a smooth verse and a ryming jingle, but he has noe power or variety of harmony; but always the same dull cadence, and a continuall bagpipe drone. Mr. Dryden's expressions are always worthy of his thoughts: but Pope never speaks nor thinks at all; or, which is all one, his language is frequently as barbarous, as his thoughts are false.*

" *This I have ventured to say, in spite of popular error.*

conjunction with his friend Montague, he aimed at Dryden by the parody on **THE HIND AND THE PANTHER**, represented this great writer as a misera-

But popular errour can be of noe significancy either to you or me, who have seen Mr. Settle in higher reputation than Mr. Pope is at present. And they who live thirty years hence, will find Mr. Pope in the same cloffe in which Mr. Settle is now; unlesse the former makes strange improvements. Good sense is the sole foundation of good writing; and noe authour who wants solidity, can ever long endure. This I have ventur'd to say in spight of popular error; and this is in my power, when ever I please, to prove to all the world.

" You may now see, Sir, by this letter, how little men know one another, who converse daily together. How many were there in Mr. Dryden's life-time, who made him believe that I should be the foremost, if I surviv'd him, to arreign his reputation? whereas it is plain, that I am he, of all his acquaintance, who flattered him least while living, yet was always ready to doe him justice both behind his back, and before his enemies' face; and now he is gone, am the most ready of all his acquaintance to assert his merit, and to vindicate his glory.

" If Mr. Dryden has faults, (as where is the mortall who has none?) I, by searching for them, perhaps could find them. But whatever the mistaken world may think, I am always willing to be pleas'd; nay, am always greedy of pleasure as any Epicure living; and whenever I am naturally touch'd, I never look for faults. But whenever a cryed-up authour does not please me, upon the first impression, I am apt to seek for the reasons of it, to see if the fault is in him or in me. Wherever genius runs thro' a work, I forgive its faults; and wherever that is wanting, noe beauties can touch me. Being struck by Mr. Dryden's genius, I have noe eyes for his errors;

ble poetaster, in an anonymous satire written some years before the Revolution ;^a on which probably,

and I have no eyes for his enemies' beauties, because I am not struck by their genius.

" I am, Sir,

" Your most humble

" and faithful servant,

June the 4th, 1715,

J. DENNIS."

^a See A SATIRE ON THE MODERN TRANSLATORS :

" But what excuse, what preface can atone

" For crimes which guilty Bayes has singly done ?

" Bayes, whose Rose-Alley ambuscade enjoin'd

" To be to vices which he practis'd kind ;

" And brought the venom of a spiteful satire

" To the safe innocence of a dull translator :

" Bayes, who by all the club was thought most fit

" To violate the Mantuan Prophet's wit,

" And more debauch what loose Lucretius writ.

" When I behold the rovings of his Muse,

" How soon Assyrian ointment she would lose,

" For diamond buckles sparkling at their shoes ;

" When Virgil's height is lost, when Ovid soars,

" And in heroicks Canace deplores

" Her follies louder than her father roars ;

" I'd let him take Almanzor for his theme,

" In lofty verse make Maximin blaspheme,

" Or sing in softer airs St. Catharine's dream :

" Nay, I could hear him damn last ages' wit,

" And rail at excellence he ne'er can hit ;

" His envy should at powerful Cowley rage,

" And banish sense, with Jonson, from the stage ;

" His sacrilege should plunder Shakspeare's urn ;

" With a dull prologue make the ghost return,

when he became a Tory, he did not reflect with much satisfaction ; and on the same ground,

- " To bear a second death, and greater pain,
- " While the fiend's words the oracle profane :
- " But when not satisfied with spoils at home,
- " The pirate would to foreign borders roam,
- " May he still split on some unlucky coast,
- " And have his works or dictionary lost ;
- " That he may know what Roman authors mean,
- " No more than does our blind translatress Behn !"

See also p. 519, n. 4.

Prior never published any satire but this, and one *ON THE MODERN POETS*, which he wrote in 1687 or 1688. From his *HEADS OF A TREATISE UPON LEARNING*, a manuscript formerly in the possession of the Duchess Dowager of Portland, it appears, that he abstained from this dangerous exercise of his talents, on prudential considerations. The latter part only of the passage to which I allude, relates to the subject before us ; but as it contains some anecdotes of this poet, from his own pen, which have never been printed, I shall give it entire :

" - - As to poetry, I mean the writing of verses, it is another thing. I would advise no man to attempt it, except he cannot help it ; and if he cannot, it is in vain to dissuade him from it. This genius is perceived so soon, even in our childhood, and increases so strongly in our youth, that he who has it never will be brought from it, do what you will. Cowley felt it at ten years, and Waller could not get rid of it at sixty. As to my own part, I felt this impulse very soon, and shall continue to feel it as long as I can think. I remember nothing farther in life, than that I made verses. I chose Guy of Warwick for my first hero ; and killed Colborn, the Giant, before I was big enough for Westminster. But I had two accidents in youth, which hindered me from being quite

Rowe, who had too exquisite a taste to have been insensible to our author's powers, in a poetical epistle, published a few years before his death,'

possessed with the Muse. I was bred in a college, [St. John's, Cambridge,] where prose was more in fashion than verse; and as soon as I had taken my first degree, was sent the King's Secretary to the Hague. There I had enough to do in studying my French and Dutch, and altering my Terentian and original style into that of Articles and Convention. So that poetry, which by the bent of my mind might have become the business of my life, was, by the happiness of my education, only the amusement of it: and in this too, from the prospect of some little fortune to be made, and friendship to be cultivated with the great men, I did not launch much into satire; which, however agreeable for the present to the writers or encouragers of it, does in time do neither of them good; considering the uncertainty of fortune and the various changes of Ministry, and that every man, as he resents, may punish in his turn of greatness;—and that in England a man is less safe as to politicks, than he is in a bark upon the coast, in regard to the change of the wind, and the danger of shipwreck."

In the latter part of this passage Prior had perhaps Arthur Maynwaring in his thoughts; who set out a strong Tory, and soon after the Revolution, wrote a very severe satire against King William and Queen Mary, entitled *TARQUIN AND TULLIA*; of which, probably, when he afterwards was connected with the Whigs, and became a member of the Kit-kat Club, he was thoroughly ashamed. In the *STATE POEMS*, vol. iii. p. 319, it is attributed to Dryden; but Pope told Mr. Spence, that it was written by Maynwaring. "That very hot copy of verses," Pope calls it.

9 EPISTLE TO FLAVIA. Oldmixon, in his "Arts of

once intended to have inserted the following verses ; which, though they were then suppressed, have been since restored to the place where they originally stood, and now make a part of that elegant poet's works :

- " Wit, and the laws, had both the same ill fate,
- " And partial tyrants sway'd in either state.
- " Ill-natured censure would be sure to damn
- " An alien wit, of independent fame ;
- " While BAYES, grown old, and *harden'd in offence,*
- " *Was suffer'd to write on, in spite of sense ;*
- " Back'd by his friends, the invader brought along
- " A crew of foreign words into our tongue,
- " To ruin and enslave the free-born English song : }
- " Still the *prevailing faction* propp'd his throne,
- " *And to four volumes let his plays run on."*

These petty assaults, however, in no degree diminished the reputation of Dryden, which is now elevated beyond the reach of envy, ridicule, or satire ; and posterity, to whose judgment with great calmness and magnanimity he appealed from his contemporary adversaries, has done him ample justice, by allotting to him that distinguished

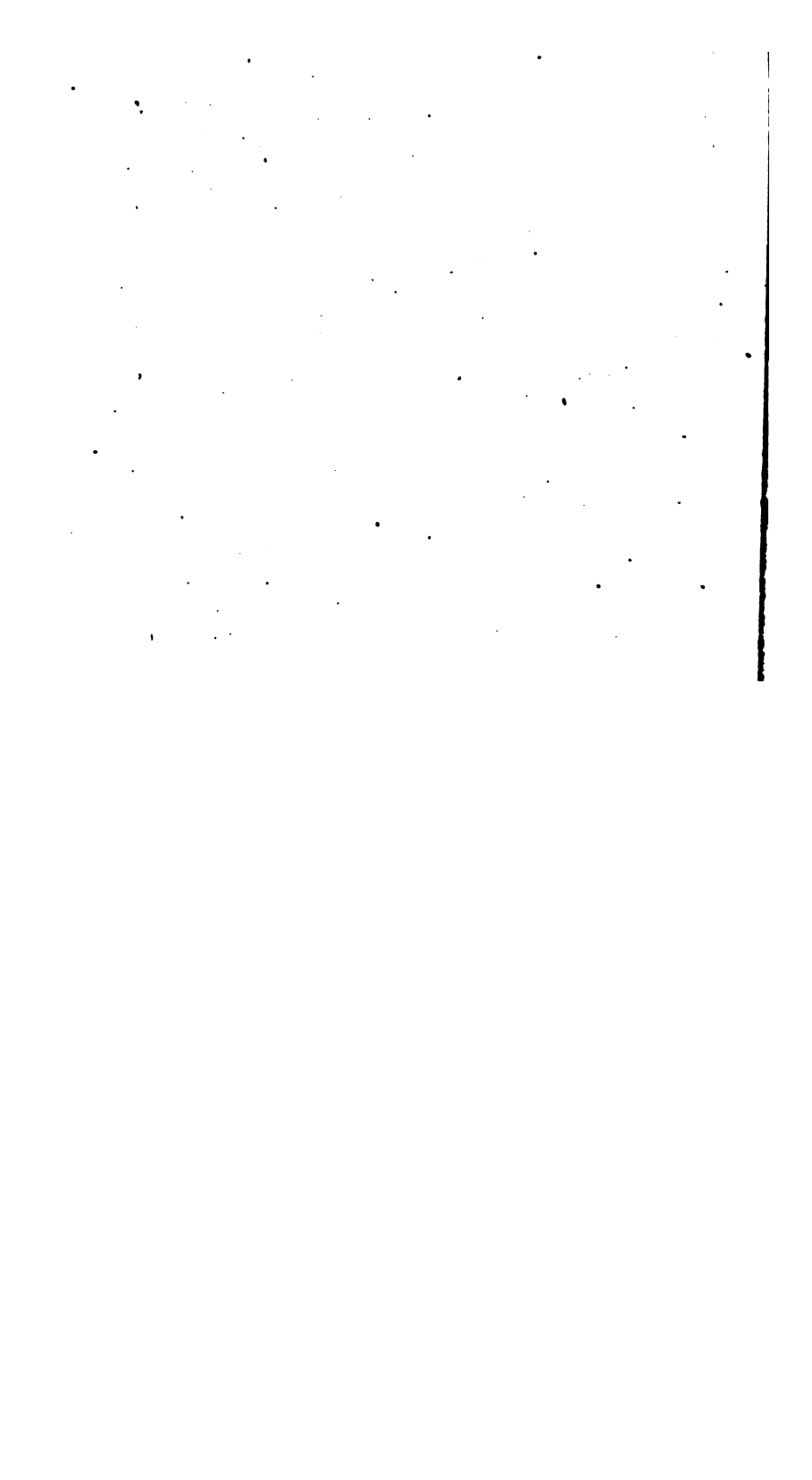
Logick and Rhetorick," 1728, says, that Rowe had inserted these lines in a poem which he sent to the press, but afterwards recalled them ; and that he copied them from Rowe's manuscript. He then subjoins them, as a literary curiosity. But though they did not appear in the Epistle to Flavia, in Rowe's Poems, printed in quarto in 1714, they were published with his name, in the same year, in Pemberton's Miscellany ; and were afterwards inserted in the Epistle to which they originally belonged.

place in the Temple of Fame, to which no one now presumes to controvert his title.

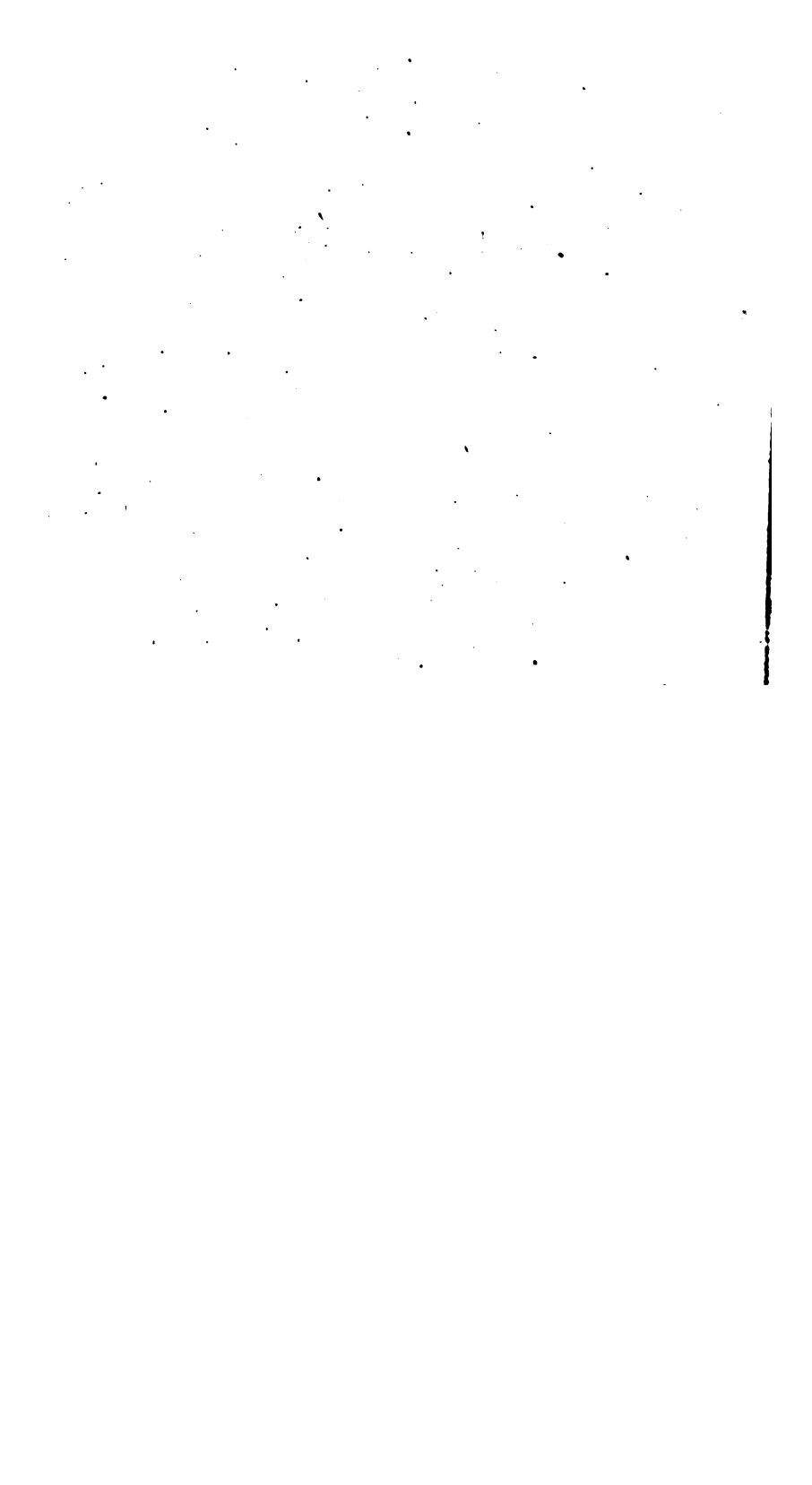
Such is the amount of all the information which I have been able to obtain concerning this great writer. It is to be regretted that the history of his life was not undertaken at an early period, while some of his contemporaries were yet living, who might have supplied us with memorials which would have precluded the necessity of sometimes exploring our way by the glimmering twilight of uncertain tradition. From the various inquiries and researches that have been made for this work, I trust it will be easily perceived, that if the notices which have been procured of his private life and domestick manners in any degree have fallen short of the wishes of his admirers, the defect cannot justly be ascribed to a want of zeal or diligence in his biographer. To make Dryden better known to his countrymen than he hitherto has been; to delineate the *man* rather than the *poet*, by collecting from every quarter, and from sources hitherto unexplored, whatever might contribute to throw new light upon his character, and illustrate the history of his works, has been the principal object of the preceding pages. A critical examination of the merits and defects of his various productions formed no part of the present under-

taking ; and indeed may be well dispensed with, after Dr. Johnson's elaborate and admirable disquisition on his writings ;¹ than which a more beautiful and judicious piece of criticism perhaps has not appeared since the days of Aristotle.—I shall therefore no longer detain the reader from the perusal of the ensuing volumes ; which contain such a variety of excellence, that,—so long as justness of thought and vigour of expression, fertility of mind and copiousness of illustration, shall have the power of enchaining the attention and commanding the admiration of mankind,—to all who seek to amuse the fancy and to inform the judgment, they must continue to prove an abundant source of instruction and delight.

¹ With that incomparable work should be read his exquisite parallel of Dryden and Pope, in the *Life of the latter poet*, pp. 166—171, edit. 1783 ; in which “ the superiority of genius,—that power which constitutes a poet ; that quality without which judgment is cold and knowledge is inert ; that energy which collects, combines, amplifies and animates ; ”—is, “ with some hesitation,” attributed to Dryden.



APPENDIX.



APPENDIX.

NUMBER I.

DRYDEN'S PATENT.

Pat. 22 Car. II. p. 6. n. 6.

CHARLES the Second, by the grace of God, of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, &c. to the Lords Commissioners of our Treasury, Treasurer, Chancellor, Under-treasurer, Chamberlaines and Barons of the Exchequer, of us, our heires and successors, now being and that hereafter shall bee, and to all other the officers and ministers of our said court and of the receipt there, now being and that hereafter shall bee, and to all others to whom these presents shall come ; greeting.

Know yee, that wee, for and in consideration of the many good and acceptable services by John Dryden, Master of Arts,* and eldest sonne of Erasmus

* Concerning some of the subjects stated in the preceding pages, wherever I entertained any doubts, my researches were continued even after the sheets were printed off, in which such information was used as my utmost diligence could procure. One of these was, Dryden's Degree of Master of Arts ; an honour which I

Dryden, of Tichmarsh in the county of Northampton, Esquire, to us heretofore done and performed,

was sure he had obtained, otherwise this designation would not here have been given to him. Finding no trace of his having taken that degree at Cambridge or Oxford, I made further inquiries on this subject; and have lately discovered that he became a Master of Arts on the 17th of June, 1668, by virtue of a Dispensation from Dr. Gilbert Sheldon, Archbishop of Canterbury, granted in consequence of a letter of recommendation written to the Archbishop by King Charles the Second. Of this dispensation a memorial is preserved in the Faculty-Office, (Book C. p. 236, b.) which, by the favour of my friend Sir William Scott, Judge of the High Court of Admiralty, and Master of the Faculties, I have transcribed:

**" Dispensatio JOANNI DRYDEN, pro gradu
Artium Magistri.**

" GILBERTUS providentiâ divinâ Cantuariensis Archiepiscopus, &c. dilecto nobis in Christo JOANNI DRYDEN, in Artibus Baccalaureo, perantiquâ Dreydenorum familiâ in agro Northamptoniensi oriundo, salutem et gratiam. QUUM in scholis rite constitutis mos laudabilis et consuetudo invaluerit, approbatione tam ecclesiarum bene reformatarum, quam hominum doctissimorum, à multis retrò annis, ut quicumque in aliqua artium liberalium scientia cum laude desudaverint, insigni aliquo dignitatis gradu decorarentur; Quum etiam, publicâ legum auctoritate muniti, Cantuarienses Archiepiscopi gradus prædictos et honoris titulos in homines bene merentes conferendi potestate gaudeant et jamdudum gavisi sint, prout ex libro authentico de Facultatibus taxandis Parlamenti auctoritate confirmato plenius apparet; Nos igitur prædictâ auctoritate freti, et antecessorum nostrorum exemplum imitati, te Joannem prædictum, cujus vitæ

and taking notice of the learning and eminent abilities of him the said John Dryden, and of his

probitas, bonarum literarum scientia, morumque integritas, vel ipsius domini Regis testimonio perspectæ sunt, MAGISTRI IN ARTIBUS titulo et gradu insigniri decrevimus, et tehore presentium in Artibus Magistrum actualem cteamus, pariterque in numerum Magistrorum in Artibus hujusce regni aggregamus; juramento infra scripto prius per nos de te exacto, et a te jurato:—*Ego Joannes Dryden, ad gradum et titulum Magistri in Artibus per Reverendissimum in Christo patrem ac dominum, Gilbertum divinâ providentiâ Cantuariensem Archiepiscopum, totius Angliæ Primatem et Metropolitanum, admittendus, teste mihi conscientia testificor serenissimum nostrum regem Carolum Secundum esse unicum et supremum gubernatorem hujusce regni Angliæ, &c. sicut me Deus adjuvet, per sacra Dei evangelia.*—Proviso semper quod hæ literæ tibi non proficiant, nisi registrentur et subscribantur per Clericum Regiæ Majestatis ad Facultates in Cancellaria.

"Dat. sub sigillo de Facultatibus, decimo septimo die mensis Junii, Anno Domini 1668, et nostræ translationis anno quinto."

It is to be regretted, that so honourable a testimony in our author's favour as that referred to in the preceding instrument, should not have been preserved. I entertained some hopes of finding a copy of the King's letter on this occasion, either in the Secretary of State's Office, or the Paper Office; but they have been both examined with this view in vain. It was not very probable that it should have been recited, together with the Dispensation itself, when that instrument was registered in the Court of Chancery: yet, as that might have been the case, an inquiry has also been made in the Chapel of the Rolls: but the returns thither from the Dispensation Office in

great skill and elegant style both in verse and prose, and for diverse other good causes and considerations us thereunto especially moving, have nominated, constituted, declared, and appointed, and by these presents do nominate, constitute, declare and appoint, him the said John Dryden, our POET LAUREAT and HISTORIOGRAPHER ROYAL; giving and granting unto him the said John

Chancery are extremely irregular and imperfect; and no returns whatsoever relative to the year 1668, have been made from that office to the Rolls. In the Dispensation Office itself there are no records prior to 1690.

Sir William D'Avenant died in April, 1668, about two months before Dryden obtained this degree. It should seem, therefore, that he sought this literary decoration, *honoris causâ*, to add somewhat to his pretensions, while he was soliciting to be appointed Poet Laureat and Historiographer Royal; though he did not obtain those offices till two years afterwards.—The degree of Doctor has not unfrequently been conferred at Lambeth; but a dispensation for the degree of Master of Arts is much less common; insomuch, that in a cursory view of the large folio volume which contains the preceding memorial, I did not discover a single degree of this kind conferred by Archbishop Sheldon, except in the case of Dryden. As he who has taken a Bachelor's degree at Cambridge, may at the proper time, or at any subsequent period, of course obtain that of Master, on performing the ordinary exercises, it seems probable that our author had left Trinity College in ill humour; or that some circumstance now undiscoverable had occurred there, before his departure, which induced him to prefer a Lambeth Dispensation to the more regular and formal honours of the University.

Dryden all and singular the rights, privileges, benefits, and advantages, thereunto belonging, as fully and amply as Sir Geoffrey Chaucer, Knight, Sir John Gower, Knight, John Leland, Esquire, William Camden, Esquire, Benjamin Johnson, Esquire, James Howell, Esquire, Sir William D'Avenant, Knight, or any other person or persons having or exercising the place or employment of Poet Laureat or Historiographer, or either of them, in the time of any of our royal progenitors, had or received, or might lawfully claim or demand, as incident or belonging unto the said places or employments, or either of them. And for the further and better encouragement of him the said John Dryden, diligently to attend the said employment, we are graciously pleased to give and grant, and by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, do give and grant, unto the said John Dryden, one Annuity or yearly pension of two hundred pounds of lawful money of England, during our pleasure, to have and to hold, and yearly to receive the said annuity or pension of two hundred pounds of lawful money of England by the yeare, unto the said John Dryden and his assigns, from the death of the said Sir William D'Avenant lately deceased, for and during our pleasure, at the receipt of the Exchequer, of us, our heirs and successors, out of the treasure of us, our heirs and successors, from time to time there remaining, by the hands of the Treasurer or Treasurers and Chamberlains of us, our heirs and successors, there for the time being, at the four

usual terms of the year, that is to say, at the feast of the nativity of St. John the Baptist, St. Michael the Archangel, the birth of our LORD GOD, and the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, by even and equal portions to be paid, the first payment thereof to begin at the feast of the nativity of St. John the Baptist next and immediately after the death of the said Sir William D'Avenant, deceased. Wherefore our will and pleasure is, and we do by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, require, command, and authorize the said Lords Commissioners of our Treasury, Treasurer, Chancellor, Under-treasurer, Chamberlains, and Barons, and other officers and ministers of the said Exchequer now and for the time being, not only to pay or cause to be paid unto the said John Dryden and his assigns, the said Annuity or yearly Pension of two hundred pounds of lawful money of England, according to our will and pleasure herein before expressed, but also from time to time to give full allowance of the same, according to the true meaning of these presents. And these presents, or the inrolment thereof shall be unto all men whom it shall concern a sufficient warrant and discharge for the paying and allowing of the same accordingly, without any further or other warrant procured or obtained. And further know ye, that we, of our especial grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion, have given and granted, and by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, do give and grant, unto the said John

Dryden and his assigns, one butt or pipe of the best canary wine, to have, hold, receive, perceive, and take the said butt or pipe of canary wine unto the said John Dryden and his assigns, during our pleasure, out of our store of wines yearly and from time to time remaining at or in our cellars within or belonging to our palace of Whitehall. And for the better effecting of our will and pleasure herein, we do hereby require and command all and singular our officers and ministers whom it shall or may concern, or who shall have the care or charge of our said wines, that they or some of them do deliver or cause to be delivered the said butt or pipe of wine yearly, and once in every year, unto the said John Dryden or his assigns, during our pleasure, at such time and times as he or they shall demand or desire the same. And these presents, or the inrolment thereof, shall be unto all men whom it shall concern, a sufficient warrant and discharge in that behalf, although express mention, &c. In witness, &c.

Witness the King at Westminster, the eighteenth day of August. [1670.]

Per breve de privato sigillo.

NUMBER II.

THE AGREEMENT CONCERNING THE FABLES.

I doe hereby promise to pay John Dryden, Esquire, or order, on the 25th of March, 1699, the sume of two hundred and fifty guineas, in consideration of ten thousand verses, which the said John Dryden, Esquire, is to deliver to me Jacob Tonson, when finished, whereof seaven thousand five hundred verses, more or lesse, are allready in the said Jacob Tonson's possession. And I do hereby further promise and engage my selfe to make up the said sume of two hundred and fifty guineas, three hundred pounds sterling, to the said John Dryden, Esquire, his executors, administrators or assigns, att the beginning of the second impression of the said ten thousand verses. In witnesse whereof, I have hereunto sett my hand and seal this twentieth day of March, 1698-9.

JACOB TONSON.

Scaled and delivered, being first
stampd pursuant to the acts of
parliament for that purpose, in
the presence of

Benj. Portlock,
Will. Congreve.

March the twenty-fourth, 1698.

Received then of Mr. Jacob Tonson the summ
of two hundred sixty-eight pounds fifteen shillings,

in pursuance of an agreement for ten thousand verses to be delivered by me to the said Jacob Tonson, whereof I have already delivered to him about seven thousand five hundred, more or less : he the sayd Jacob Tonson, being obliged to make up the foresayd sum of two hundred sixty-eight pounds fifteen shillings, three hundred pounds, at the beginning of the second impression of the foresayd ten thousand verses.

I say, received by me,

JOHN DRYDEN.

Wittness, Charles Dryden.

The following receipt is written on the back of JACOB TONSON'S agreement, dated March 20, 1698-9.

June 11, 1713. Received of the within-named Jacob Tonson, thirty-one pounds five shillings, which, with two hundred sixty-eight pounds fifteen shillings paid Mr. John Dryden the 24th of March 1698, is in full for the copy of a book intituled "Dryden's FABLES," consisting of ten thousand verses, more or lesse : I say received as administratrix to the said John Dryden, of such effects as were not administered to by Charles Dryden.

ANN SYLVIVS.

Wittnesses, Eliz. Jones,

Jacob Tonson, Jun'.

Paid Mr. Dryden, March the 23d, 1698.

	£.	s.	d.
In a bag in silver	100	0	0
In silver besides	021	15	6
66 Lewis d'ores at 17s. 6d.	057	15	0
83 Guynecas at [1] 1 6	089	4	6
	268	15	0
250 Guynecas at £.1 1s. 6d. are	268	15	0
£.	s.	d.	
268	15	0	
31	5	0	
300	0	0	

NUMBER III.

" Mr. RUSSEL's Bill for Mr. DRYDEN's Funerals.

For the funerall of Esq^r Dryden.

	£.	s.	d.
A double coffin covered with cloath, and sett of [off] with work guilt with gold	5	0	0
A herse with six white Flanders horses	1	10	0
Covering the herse with velvet, and velvet housings for the horses	1	0	0
17 plumes of feathers for herse and horses	3	0	0
Carried over	10	10	0

	£.	s.	d.
Brought over	10	10	0
Hanging the Hall* with a border of bays	5	0	0
6 dozen of paper escucheons for the Hall	3	12	0
A large pall of velvet	0	10	0
10 silk escucheons for the pall.	2	10	0
24 buck : escucheons for herse and horses	2	8	0
12 shields and six shaffroones for ditto	2	8	0
3 mourning coaches with six horses ...	2	5	0
Silver dish and rosemary	0	5	0
8 scarves for musicioners :	2	0	0
8 hatbands for ditto	1	0	0
17 yds of crape to cover their instru- ments	1	14	0
4 mourning cloakes	0	10	0
Pd 6 men moveing the corps to the Hall	0	6	0
8 horsemen in long cloakes to ride before the herse	4	0	0
13 footmen in velvet capps, to walk on each side the herse	1	19	0
6 porters that attended at the doores, and walked before the herse to the Abby, in mourning gowns and staves	1	10	0
An atchievement for the house	3	10	0
	45	17	0

* The Hall of the College of Physicians.

NUMBER IV.¹

MONUMENT IN THE CHURCH AT TICHMARSH.

“ In the middle of the north wall of the chapel within the parish church of Tichmarsh in Northamptonshire, is a wooden monument, having the bust of a person at top, wreathed, crowned with laurel. Underneath, “ THE POET ;” and below, this inscription :

“ Here lie the honoured remains
of Erasmus Dryden, Esq., and Mary Pickering
his wife.

He was the third son of Sir Erasmus Dryden, an antient Baronet, who lived with great honour in this county, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

Mr. Dryden was a very ingenious worthy gentleman, and Justice of the Peace in this county.

He married Mrs. Mary Pickering, daughter of the reverend Doc² Pickering, of Aldwinckle, and grand-daughter to Sir Gilbert Pickering :

Of her it may truly be said

She was a crown to her husband :

Her whole conversation was as becometh
the Gospel of Christ.

¹ For a copy of this Epitaph I am indebted to Mr. John Nichols, author of the History of Leicestershire. A transcript of the same epitaph was also obligingly communicated to me by William Walcot, Jun. of Oundle, Esq.

² Mr. Henry Pickering does not appear to have taken the degree of doctor, in divinity or law, in either university.

They had 14 children ; the eldest of whom was
John Dryden, Esq.,
the celebrated Poet and Laureat of his time.
His bright parts and learning are best seen in his
own excellent writings on various subjects.
We boast, that he was bred and had
his first learning here ;
where he has often made us happie
by his kind visits and most delightfull conversation.
He married the Lady Elizabeth Howard, daughter to
Henry¹ Earl of Berkshire ; by whom he had three
sons, Charles, John, and Erasmus-Henry ;
and, after 70 odd yeares,⁴ when nature could be no
longer supported, he received the notice of
his approaching dissolution
with sweet submission and entire resignation
to the Divine Will ;
and he took so tender and obliging a farewell of
his friends, as none but he himself could have
expressed ; of which sorrowfull number
I was one.

His body was honourably interred in Westminster
Abby, among the greatest wits of divers ages.
His sons were all fine, ingenious, accomplished
gentlemen: they died in their youth,* unmarried:

¹ Thomas, the first Earl of Berkshire, is the person
meant.

⁴ This statement is certainly inaccurate. See p. 5, n. 5.
and p. 389, n.

* Charles, at the time of his death, was thirty-eight
years old ; John probably in his thirty-third year ; and
Erasmus-Henry died in the forty-second year of his age.

Sir Erasmus-Henry, the youngest, lived
till the antient honour of the family
descended on him.

After his death, it came to his good uncle,
Sir Erasmus Dryden ;

whose grandson is the present Sir John Dryden,
of Canons-Ashby, the antient seat of the Family.

Sir Erasmus Dryden, the first named, married his
daughters into very honourable families ; the
eldest to Sir John Philipps ;¹ the second to
Sir John Hartop ;² the youngest³ was married
to Sir John Pickering, great grand-father to
the present Sir Gilbert Pickering, Bart. ;
and to the same persons I have the honour to be
a grand-daughter :

And it is with delight and humble thankfulness
that I reflect on the character of
my pious ancestors ; and that I am
now, with my owne hand, paying my duty to
Sir Erasmus Dryden,
my great grand-father, and to
Erasmus Dryden, Esq.,
my honoured uncle,⁴ in the 80th year of my age.

ELIZA. CREED, 1722."

¹ Sir *Richard* Philipps, according to Collins.

² Sir *Edward* Hartop, says Collins.

³ Susanna, the wife of Sir John Pickering, according
to Collins, was the *eldest* daughter of Sir Erasmus Driden,

⁴ Erasmus Driden, the poet's father, was the writer's
great uncle.

NUMBER V.

*Persons in whose Cabinets letters written by Dryden
may probably be found.*

The Earl of Exeter.

The representatives of James, the second Duke of Ormond.

The Earl of Lauderdale.

The representatives of Thomas Howard, the first Earl of Berkshire.

The representatives of Catharine, Duchess of Buckinghamshire, who died March 13, 1742-3.
Lord Clifford.

The representatives of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester ;—probably the Earl of Sandwich and the Earl of Lisburne.

The representative of Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester.—Q. The Earl of Clarendon.

The representative of George Saville, Marquis of Halifax.—Q. The Earl of Chesterfield, or the Duke of Devonshire.

The representatives of the late Sir George Saville, Bart.

The representatives of Sir Robert Howard, Bart. who died in September, 1698.

The representatives of Sir Charles Sidley, Bart. who died in August, 1701.

The representatives of Richard Graham, Jun, Esq., (the son of Richard Graham, Esq., author of the Lives of the Painters,) who died in 1749. He was at the time of his death Commissioner of the Works of Westminster Bridge.

The representatives of Sir John Vanbrugh.

The representatives of Sir William Trumbull, Bart., whose grand-daughter married a younger son of Lord Sandys.

The representatives of Walter Moyle, Esq., who died in 1721.

The representatives of Sir Godfrey Kneller, who died in 1723.—Q. Mr. Kneller, of Wiltshire, his grand-nephew, by a female.

The representatives of Dr. Knightly Chetwood, Dean of Gloucester; whose son, Dr. John Chetwood of the Commons, died at Tempsford, in Bedfordshire, in 1735.

The representative of Sir William Leveson Gower, Bart. who died in 1692 : probably the Marquis of Stafford.

The Earl of Salisbury, as representative of James the fourth Earl of Salisbury.

The representatives of Lady Chudleigh, whose son, Sir George Chudleigh, of Ashton, in Devonshire, Bart., died in 1738, leaving three daughters.

The Earl of Abingdon.

The representatives of John Vaughan, the last Earl of Carbery, who died in January, 1712-13, leaving a daughter, who married Charles, Marquis of Winchester, afterwards Duke of Bolton. She died Sep. 20, 1751.

The representatives of William Walsh, of Abberley, in Worcestershire, Esq.

The Duke of Buccleugh, whose great-grandfather was the eldest son of Anne Scott, Duchess of Monmouth; the representatives of George, Lord Lansdowne; Sir William Bowyer, of Denham Court, Bart.; Gilbert Dolben, Esq.; and Sir Erasmus Philipps, Bart., who died in 1696, and was Dryden's first cousin; have been applied to, but are not possessed of any letters written by him.

Among the Dorset Papers are at least three letters, written by our author to his patron, Charles, Earl of Dorset.

In the Preface to *CLEOMENES*, Dryden says, that about the year 1685 he presented Anthony, the fourth Viscount Falkland, with a French book, in which he had written "the names of many subjects that he had thought on for the stage." It is hoped the representative of the late Lord Falkland will gratify the publick with a transcript of this literary curiosity, if it be yet in the library of that noble family.

Rymer's "Essay on the Tragedies of the last Age," in the blank leaves of which Dryden wrote several observations on that work, was some years ago in the library of the late David Garrick, Esq.; but Mrs. Garrick has informed me, that it is now

not to be found there. It would be a publick benefit, if the person into whose hands this book has fallen, would give notice of it; as there is some doubt whether those remarks have been arranged in the order intended by the author.

THE END OF THE FIRST PART OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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